THE MAGAZINE FOR MAT FANS

A CHAMPION SPORTS PUBLICATION

Wrestling REVUE

APRIL/63 50c

SPECIAL!
The SENSATIONAL DESTROYER

FEATURES:
KILLER KOWALSKI
KARL GOTCH
KAREN KELLOGG
BILL MILLER
DETROIT WHOPPER
IN FULL COLOR:
VERNE GAGNE

READERS' pros and cons

PLAYING FAVORITES?

Sirs:

Your article "Referees Fight Back" (Oct/62) made me laugh. The truth is, the majority of referees do an incredibly bad job because they so obviously play favorites. This is widely recognized by long-suffering fans, both in Canada and the U.S. Time after time you see a referee stand idly by while his favorite pulls every dirty trick in the book. But let the victim try to defend himself with similar tactics and watch how quickly the referee steps in.

And can those referees stall if their favorite is pinned. They'll gaze at the ropes, look up dreamily at the lights, do everything but count.

How can referees get away with such nauseating tactics? Fans don't expect them to see everything. But we do want arbiters who are honest and objective. Clean up refereeing and the sport will enjoy a rebirth of popularity.

ERNIE SMART
Nanaimo, B.C., Canada

Sirs:

I would like to know why referees are permitted to play favorites. Take the case of Cowboy Bob Ellis for example. Recently, in St. Louis, Ellis was wrestling former world champion Lou Thesz. Bob was knocked over the ropes and Thesz yanked him back into the ring and pinned him. For this, the referee disqualified Thesz!

A few weeks later, also in St. Louis, Ellis was wrestling another former world champion, Pat O'Connor. Ellis did practically the same thing to O'Connor as Thesz had done to him. But the final decision was just the reverse. The referee awarded the fall to Ellis.

What gives with this kind of refereeing?

FRANK LIKES
Godfrey, Ill.

DON'T NEGLECT HAWAII

Sirs:

We in Hawaii enjoy wrestling just as much as those in the other 49 States. And we love the action-packed pages of WRESTLING REVUE. But how about coverage on top Island Star Curtis Iaukea? He won the U.S. title in June, 1962, and defended it successfully againt some real tough ones — Pat O'Connor, Nick Bockwinkle and Ben Sharpe.

WATTERS O. MARTIN, JR.
Honolulu, Hawaii

INSPIRED

Sirs:

You can't imagine how much your story on Silento Rodriguez ("Portrait of Courage," WR Dec/62) inspired us here at the Ontario Association of the Deaf. May we reprint that article in our bi-monthly house organ, The OAD News?

ROGER McAULEY
Scarborough, Ont.

● Permission granted—ED.

JOHN PAUL HENNING

SUGGESTION

Sirs:

Let me compliment you on your "Pin Up Series." However, I have a suggestion that could improve even this fabulous feature. Why not include the winner of your Popularity Contest, Wilbur Snyder, and other favorites like Gagne, Pepper Gomez, Ed Carpentier, and John Paul Henning?

KENNETH STARR
Birmingham, Mich.

● In time, Mr. Starr, in time—ED.

NEW CHAMP IN 1966!

Sirs:

I've been telling my friends I'm going to be a great wrestler. Within four years Buddy Rogers is going to get knocked off his throne—by ME. I'll defeat all opponents with my figure four leglock. Fans will hate me, but they'll swarm to the arenas to see me. I'll earn more money than any wrestler in history.

Some of my friends have scoffed at me. Do you? Well, stick around. I'll be on the cover of WRESTLING REVUE —June, 1966, issue.

JOHN CECI
Lindenhurst, N. Y.

JOE SCARPELLO

Sirs:

We have a brilliant and extremely popular wrestler in this area named Joe Scarpello. Since I have been a faithful reader of your wonderful magazine for years, I wonder why there has never been even one mention of this fine wrestler? There is no doubt that he can easily beat many of those wrestlers you write about.

ALICE FUCHS
Albany, Minn.

PIN-UP ROGERS

Sirs:

You've got the finest magazine in the world, except for one thing: you haven't included Buddy Rogers in your fabulous color Pin-Up series. If you do, you'll sell a million copies.

JIM PETERSEN
San Lorenzo, Calif.

● Within the year, if what you say is true, we'll sell a million copies.—ED.

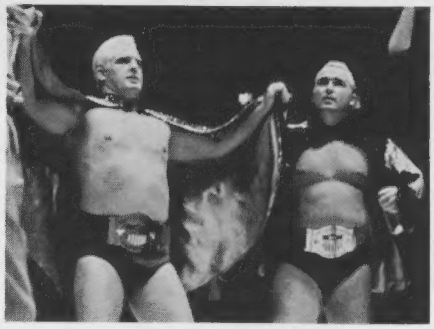
KARL GOTCH

Sirs:

I hope you publish a story on Karl Gotch in the near future. He is a fabulous wrestler. Better still, how about putting Gotch in your beautiful color Pin-up series?

JANET MORRISONN
Detroit, Mich.

● See page 11 — ED.



EDDIE AND JERRY GRAHAM

GRAHAMS STILL STIR 'EM UP

Sirs:

What fond memories your inspiring story on the Graham Brothers rekindled (Feb/63). Eddie and Jerry were masters at playing on peoples' emotions. One minute we were laughing at their antics, the next minute we were yelling for their necks. You were right when you referred to them as "The Unforgettable Tag Team". Thanks again for bringing back old times.

MARY HEALY
Bronx, N. Y.

Sirs:

What gall you had to waste valuable space on those dirty Grahams! I had all but forgotten what vile characters they were when you go and remind me all over again. I was sitting in a ringside seat the night your precious Jerry pulled a knife he had hidden in his trunks and slashed open Antonino Rocca's forehead. I ask you, is that the kind of man whose memory you want to keep alive? Shame on you.

GENE CHIDLAW
Paterson, N. J.

Sirs:

We fans in Florida know Eddie Graham as a brilliant wrestler and a great humanitarian. He donates large sums of money to charities and gives freely of his time visiting hospitals. I had no idea that he was once on the *other* side of the fence. I suppose it only goes to prove that eventually we all see the light.

ARLENE KARP
Jacksonville, Fla.

Sirs:

It is logical to assume that there can never be another team like the Graham Brothers. And I say to that, thank heavens!

MARIE LANG
Bristol, Conn.

(*continued on page* 6)

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THE MAGAZINE FOR WRESTLING FANS

Wrestling REVUE

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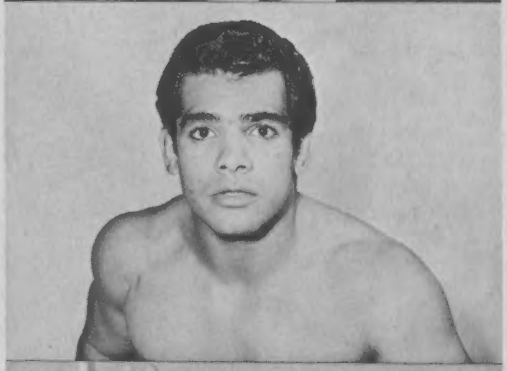

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READERS' pros and cons

(continued from page 2)

BAVARIAN BOYS WANTED

Sirs:

As co-president of the Bavarian Boys Fan Club I'm still looking for an article in your wonderful WRESTLING REVUE on Rudy and Harry. These two are without a doubt the answer to reader Wayne Winter's plea (Feb/63) for more nice, heroic- type German wrestlers.

MARIA ANN
New Haven, Coonn.

CLEAN-CUT DANNY

Sirs:

I want to compliment you for your fine story on Danny Hodge (Feb/63). I knew this natural-born athlete couldn't miss making it big in the mat world. Who wouldn't prefer a clean-cut guy like that on the heavyweight championship throne? Tell Rogers to look out.

EDDIE CAMPO
Atlanta, Georgia

RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA?

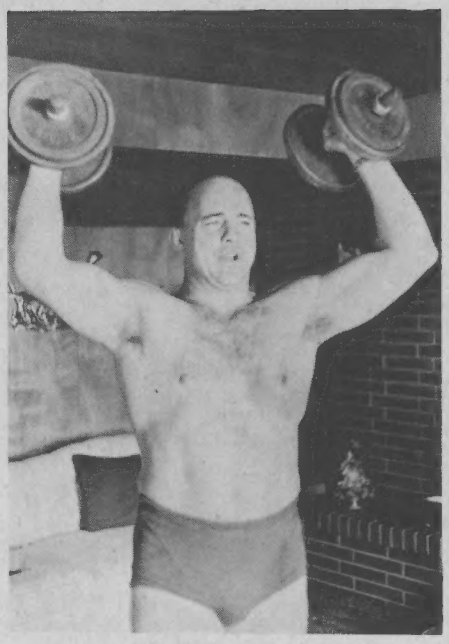
Sirs:

I address The Mongol personally: Mongol, you desire to return to your native Mongolia (Feb/63)? For this I am happy. Nicoli Volkoff lured you to America for the dollars of Wall Street capitalists, men who exploit the worker. I say return to Mongolia soon. There you will not be exploited. You will wrestle for many rubles. But, more important, you will wrestle for the greater glory of the People's Republic, The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

ALEX ZARBAROV
Moscow, Russia

● My, how WR gets around!—ED.

THE MONGOL



VERNE GAGNE

GAGNE-ROGERS

Sirs:

Please tell Verne Gagne to get off his high horse and come down to earth. He's been trying to pass himself off as heavyweight champion since the year one. Put him in the ring with the great Buddy Rogers to settle matters once and for all. You'll see how quick he settles for number 2 spot in the ratings.

IDA KOHN
Bronxville, N. Y.

Sirs:

So you finally came around to recognizing Verne Gagne as the best wrestler in the world — the rightful champion. I knew you would. It was as inevitable as night following day. Now if only Buddy Rogers had the courage to step into the ring with Verne. The very thought of such a match makes me wince. Know why? Because I can't stand the sight of blood — not even Rogers' blood.

WILLIAM DeCOLA
Fargo, N. Dak.

FANS KICK

Sirs:

What kind of idiots do those Houston promoters take us wrestling fans for? Their latest loser-washes-the-donkey gimmick is just too much. ("Night of the Jackass," Feb/63). We go to arenas to watch skilled professional wrestle hard, scientific, and clean! If we want slapstick, we go to the circus.

JACK THOMPSON
Chicago, Ill.

"MAN MOUNTAIN" KINISKI

Sirs:

How about some stories on wrestlers out here in the Canadian West? I suggest you start off with our own Gene Kiniski. He's a mountain of a man — stands 6'4", weighs 285. Gene's clobbered Whipper Watson, Hercules Cortez, Killer Kowalski, and Bearcat Wright. He had champion Rogers' number last summer, but was disqualified. I don't see how you can avoid rating Gene in the top ten.

GARY CELESTER
N. Surrey, B.C., Can.

BAD GUY?

Sirs:

In your "Bouts We Can't Forget" (Feb/63) you state that Whipper Billy Watson is mild-mannered and beloved. Listen, Whipper Billy is not always the good guy he makes himself out to be. I remember his dirty tactics in a tag team match not so long ago. He strayed from his tag rope illegally and slashed his foe from behind — kneeing, gouging. The works!

STEVE SOMOLI
Toronto, Can.

COON HUNTER

Sirs:

I would like to call your attention to a wrestler with the most unique leg hold I've ever seen. Recently I heard he broke Waldo Von Eric's leg with it. His name is Joe McCarthy. He claims to be a Coon Hunter and Dog Trainer (better not call him a 'Possum Hunter) from Tigertail, Tenn.

How about a feature story on Joe?

COY T. RICE
Idabel, Okla.

AMATEUR WRESTLERS BEWARE

Sirs:

After carefully studying Verne Gagne's dreaded "Sleeper Hold" I decided to try it out on my buddy. I put him into such a deep sleep it took five cups of black coffee and an ice-cold shower to get his eyes open. Never again!

TOMMY FINN
Milwaukee, Wis.

FABULOUS BILLY

Sirs:

Your stories on Karen Kellogg brought back personal memories of Billy Wolfe, her manager. Thirty years ago Billy was a great wrestler himself. I bet even today he could whip most of the modern grapplers. Hollywood should make a movie of Billy's fabulous life. Or, better still, why doesn't WRESTLING REVUE make this great man the subject of a feature story as only W.R. can do it?

SAM BEAMER
Oklahoma City, Okla.

● You'll be reading Billy's incredible story in WR soon.—ED.

KEEP THE GIRLS

Sirs:

Your pictures of Fran Gravette and Judy Grable (Feb/63) were the best you've ever published. Those two hot-tempered females add spice to what might otherwise have been a dull show. Please continue to publicize these cuties in your terrific magazine.

LARRY MITCHELL
Topsfield, Mass.

PANTY-WAIST MANAGER

Sirs:

Have you taken a close look at Buddy Rogers' manager? Bobby Davis, with his frilly cuffs and pomaded hair, should be barred from wrestling arenas. If Rogers got rid of Davis, maybe he himself might become a He-Man.

STEVE SONDER
Pittsburgh, Pa.

IT'S TIME. KILLER

Sirs:

What about a story on Killer Kowalski, whom I'm sure all wrestling fans know and love (?). It's time WRESTLING REVUE exposed this hated head-basher for what he is.

JON DOUGLAS
Los Angeles, Calif.

● See April/63 issue for a behind-the-scenes look at Killer—ED.

TOOTHLESS?

Sirs:

You guys must think WR readers are idiots. Are you trying to tell us that The Alaskan wrestled a 350-pound bear to a draw (Dec/62)? Come off it. If he did, the bear must have been toothless, clawless, and 80 years old!

TONY BERTOLDI
Troy, N. Y.

RATE HIM HIGH

Sirs:

The Destroyer has moved into Fred Blassie's top spot here on the West Coast. He's knocked off Blassie (twice), Ricki Starr, Haystacks Calhoun, Ray "Thunder" Stern, Enrique Torres, Mr. Moto and Dick Hutton. He drew with Ed Carpentier and Lou Thesz, who are rated No. 4 and 5 respectively by the NWA. As president of The Destroyer Fan Club, I say our man deserves to be ranked at the very top!

RICK HOFFMAN
Los Angeles, Calif.

● Watch for WR's cover story on The Destroyer in the April/63 issue—ED.

NEGLECTED TAG TEAM

Sirs:

I feel you have long neglected one of the sport's most scientific tag teams, Frankie Talaber and Leon Graham. They have licked Johnny Barend and Magnificent Maurice, the Iron Russians, the Von Krupt Brothers, the Gabors, the Volkoffs and the Von Brunner twins. A story on Frankie and Leon in your great magazine is long overdue. And how I'd love to see them in your magnificent Pin Up Series, wearing their Ohio Tag Team Championship belts.

TEDDY BERRY
Columbus, Ohio

ATTENTION SPACEMEN

Sirs:

I have a great idea for a young man who wants to break into wrestling with a big bang. This is the space age. Colonel John Glenn is a national hero because he circled the earth in a space capsule. Why doesn't some wrestler cash in on Glenn's heroic image? It would take good looks, a crew cut and a space suit (to be unzipped before each bout). I think a wrestler called "The Astronaut" would go over like a rocket.

FRANK SANDOWSKI
Phoenix, Ariz.

KAREN KELLOGG

QUEEN KAREN

Sirs:

For many months I've been following Karen Kellogg's career. Now I've just finished reading your heartwarming story, "Coronation in Bluefield" (Feb/63). This story of Karen's triumph fulfilled all my high hopes for her. She's a living doll. I hope you continue to keep us up-to-date on this sweet, determined new queen of the mat.

PAUL O'NEIL
Louisville, Ky.

● We will. See Kellogg in training, April/63—ED.

"S" APPEAL

Sirs:

I like to watch women wrestlers, especially if they've got "S" appeal. In the Feb/63 issue of WRESTLING REVUE I noticed one small photo of a real cutey named Anne Casey. How about a story on her? After all, she's rated number four, right behind Karen Kellogg.

JOHNNY REILLY
Houston, Texas

● Coming up.—ED.

MATCH OF THE WEEK

Sirs:

That was a marvelous suggestion put forth by reader Bill McTighe (Readers' Pros and Cons—Feb/63). Considering the tremendous following wrestling enjoys these days, it certainly is deserving of a nationally televised Match of the Week. To start the ball rolling I have written the local television station and advised them of the idea. I hope fans in other cities will do likewise.

JUDY SAYERS
Bakersfield, Calif.

Sirs:

Bill McTighe's Match of the Week idea could never work because it would ruin the local promoters and hence destroy wrestling itself. The wrestling establishment in America is perfect the way it is. Hundreds of wrestlers are provided with abundant work in the many territories spread across the length and breadth of North America. And each has the privilege of moving from one territory to another at the appropriate time. There is no doubt that nationally televised bouts would kill interest in local wrestlers and, before we know it, wrestling would be stricken with the same disease that has killed professional boxing — televisionitis. It's deadly!

JOHN ABINET
Wilmington, Del.

Sirs:

A Wrestling Match of the Week would be a wonderful thing. Since a sponsor would have to pay an enormous amount of money for such a program, every match would have to be of super caliber in order to justify the cost. Inferior wrestlers would quickly fall by the wayside and we fans would be treated only to the very best. Why it would be like eating filet mignon every night in the week.

BETSY LAWLESS
Portland, Ore.

● Even filet mignon can become monotonous.—ED.

GRATITUDE?

Sirs:

I was outraged to see those two wild blondes, Fran Gravette and Judy Grable (This is What Makes Sammy Run, Feb/63), putting the slug on promoter Sammy Green. He pays them good money and they turn around and lambast him—in his own arena! That's what I call gratitude. I hope Sammy didn't pay them for that particular night's work.

WALLY GREENER
Grand Rapids, Mich.

● Gentleman that he is, Sammy paid off.—ED.

Sirs:

In your terrific story about promoter Sammy Green and the girls, I noticed Fran Gravette belting a hefty male wrestler whom you called "Cyclops." He looked amused, as if she were tickling him. Who is Cyclops, anyway. Can I look forward to seeing a story about him in WR?

LAWRENCE KATZ
Garden City, N. Y.

● Indeed you can.—ED.

ISOLATIONIST

Sirs:

Please tell those foreign wrestlers to stay home. It burns me up to see talented American stars go begging for work while characters who happen to come from romantic-sounding places like Mongolia and Arabia grab all the Yankee dollars.

SYLVIA ABRAMS
Indianapolis, Ind.

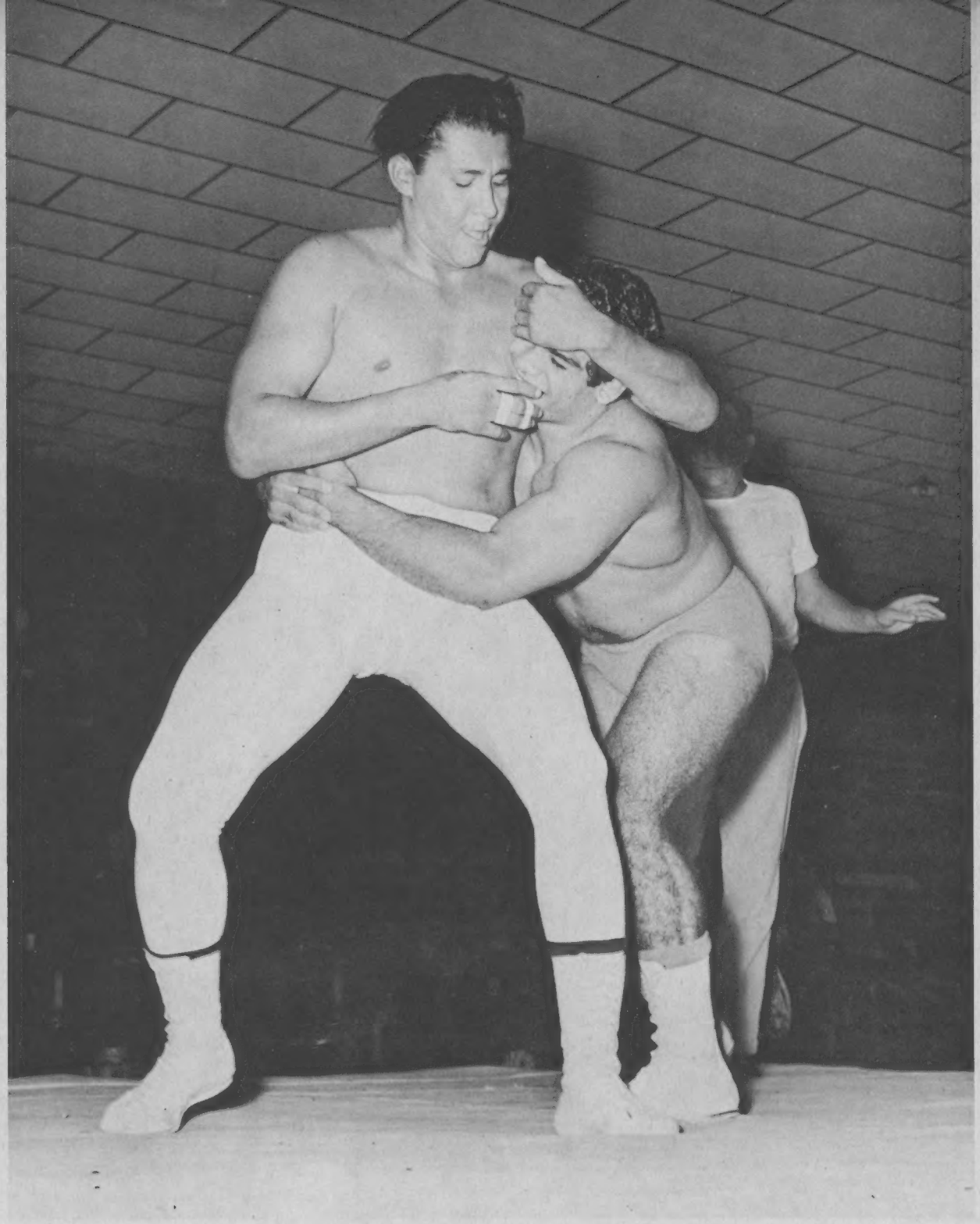
The Mummy wins again.

MUMMY witho

FOR MANY MONTHS, a weird creature who called himself "The Mummy" cut a bloody path through the Southwestern part of the U.S., squashing opponents and infuriating the populace. Since his entire body was encased in white strips of cloth, nobody knew The Mummy's identity, which tended to further increase public resentment against him.

Pressure was finally brought to bear on local promoters to let the people know who this wildman is. At first, the promoters resisted, claiming that even they didn't know who he was and, what's more, they didn't care, since he was drawing paying customers through the gates in record numbers, "and that's what counts!"

But when politicians got into the act, the pro-



Bengy Ramirez (left) vs. Mario Moreno.

ut wrappings

moters finally yielded. So it came to be that one night late last year, the despised Mummy appeared in a Houston, Texas, ring completely unwrapped from the waist up. The audience buzzed with rapid exchanges of opinions. "He's not a bad looking man." "I liked him better with the wrappings over his face." And so it went.

He was introduced as Bengy Ramirez, of Guatemala, and his opponent was a handsome Latin named Mario Moreno (see page 43). It was a good match, exciting and full of all the nasty old Mummy tricks. Most in the audience agreed: "We liked him just the way he was." But it's too late now. The Mummy is dead. Let him rest in peace, and come on Bengy! ●

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NATION-WIDE WRESTLING RESULTS

(Reported by Boxing Illustrated correspondents)

BALTIMORE, MD. The Bob Ellis-Great Scott bout ended in a double disqualification. Bud Cody and Gordon Nelson topped Skull Murphy and Pepe Figuroa. Pampero Firpo beat Tom Martin. Kostos Pappalazaros topped Lou Albano. Rita Cortez defeated Carol Little in two out of three falls.

LINCOLN, NEB. — Killer Karl Cox won on a disqualification over The Sheik. Bobby Managoff drew with Rocky Hamilton. Tarzan Tyler topped Tor Hagen. Chief Little Eagle whipped Corsica Joe.

KANSAS CITY, KAN. — Fritz Von Erich took two out of three falls from Bobo Brazil. The Sheik and The Bruiser were both counted out while slugging each other outside the ring. John Kostas won on a disqualification over Ike Eakins. Gino Marella topped Rocky Lee. Cowboy Bradley whipped Tiny Roe. Dot Dotson lost to Evelyn Stevens.

ORLANDO, FLA. — Don Curtis and Joe Scarpa drew with the Von Braunner brothers. Billy Parks topped Jim Wright. Ali Bey disposed of Bulldog Lawley.

INDIANAPOLIS, IND. — Two old rivals, the Bruiser and Wilbur Snyder, teamed up to inflict one of the worst (and bloodiest) defeats on Stan and Art Neilson. A standing room only crowd roared their approval as the Neilsons dropped two straight falls. Haystacks Muldoon defeated Don Jardine. Pee Wee Lopez whipped Marcel Senard. Rip Collins topped Gene Murphy. Chuck Conley won over Johnny Heideman.

LITTLE ROCK, ARK. — Dan Hodge successfully defended his junior heavyweight title by whipping Joe McCarthy in a bitterly fought battle. In a tag match, Jan Madrid and Louis Tillet were too smart and fast for Jackie Nichols and Tiny Smith.

LITCHFIELD, ILL. — Pat O'Connor won two straight falls from Stan Stasiak. Marcel Dupont and Lorenzo Parente defeated Duke Keomoka and Rocky Lee. Cowboy Bradley topped Tiny Roe (midgets). Corsica Joe drew with veteran Joe Millich.

SACRAMENTO, CALIF. — Ray Stevens lost the first fall, then bounced to take the next two and the match from tough Kinji Shibuya. Pepper Gomez teamed with Luis Martinez to defeat Don Manoukian and Karl Von Brock. Leo Nomellini pinned Mike Valentino. Mitsu Arakawa threw Emile Dupre. George Scott topped Chico Garcia.

SACRAMENTO, CALIF. — Ray Stevens whipped Joe Brunetti. Kinji Shibuya won two out of three falls from Red Bastein. Pepper Gomez topped The Alaskan. Hercules Cortez pinned Mike Valentino. Don Manoukian won from Guy Brunetti. Mitsu Arakawa used his famous claw hold to down Ronnie Etchinson.

WASHINGTON, D. C. — Bob Ellis defeated Lou Albano. Pompero Firpo outgunned Luis Torres. Brute Bernard and Skull Murphy won over Carlos Milano and Pete Sanchez. Mark Lewin trimmed Angelo Savoldi in two straight falls. In the main event, Antonino Rocca whipped Larry Simon.

ROCHESTER, N. Y. — The Kalmikoff brothers went to a draw against Don Leo Jonathan and Ilio DiPaolo. Bobo Brazil topped Steve Stanlee. Bob Stanlee won over Howard Martin. Eric Pomeroy pinned Diamond Jim Brady. Bobby Graham and Tony Marino teamed up to defeat the Scufflin' Hillbillies.

BATTLE CREEK, MICH. — Lou Klein (Bastien) lost on disqualification to The Great Bolo. Rickie Cortez defeated Tony Parisi. The Alaskan had an easy time whipping Danny Ferazza with a bear hug. Joe Motti topped Tim Hampton with a full-nelson.

(continued on next page)

LOU KLEIN, once known as Lou Bastien, writes that he is teaming up with LARRY CHENE and expects to share with Larry the World's Tag Team Championship within a year. Meanwhile, Lou is having a running feud with the GREAT BOLO. They have been hacking away at each other in what is called "Texas Style Death" matches. The rules for this form of legalized murder are simple: No pins count. The only way a victory can be had is when somebody quits.

Did you know that BIG MOOSE CHOLAK scored a tremendous upset win over CRUSHER LISOWSKI in Madison, Wisconsin on April 4th? But Crusher wasn't exactly beaten in the true sense of the word. Here's what happened: Lisowski won the first fall by picking up the 365-pound Moose and slamming him to the floor. Cholak zoomed back to take the second fall with a body press. Soon after the third and deciding fall got underway, Crusher was shoved out of the ring by Moose who came running out after him. A furious melee took place as the men slugged each other all over the arena. Meanwhile the referee was counting away. But Cholack was carefully listening to the count. When the referee yelled "Sixteen," Moose made sure he was close enough to the ring to jump back in before the fatal twenty was reached. By the time Lisowski realized what was going on it was too late. He had been counted out.

MIKE AND DOC GALLAGHER returned to action as a team after a long layoff to whip the KALMIKOFFS in Buffalo's Memorial Auditorium. Good to see Mike and Doc back together. They're a fabulous tag team.

"THE LISTENING POST"

Handsome DOUG GILBERT taking Minnesota by storm. A truly gifted wrestler with an enormous following. Doug holds victories over Pat O'Connor, Bob Geigel and the great Verne Gagne.

Around Iowa the big noise is a monster of a man billed "THE MONGOL." Before [illegible]

[illegible] "M". Thus we were not as crazy as it might have appeared. [illegible]e were, you see, TWO Mr. "M's" wrestling in different [illegible]lities a short time ago.

Another Regular

MONTHLY FEATURE

that has captivated the wrestling world is that delightfully informative bundle of facts and rumors published under the heading "Listening Post." Read it once and we guarantee that you'll never miss it again. It can be found ONLY in BOXING ILLUSTRATED-WRESTLING NEWS, naturally.

BY STANLEY WESTON

WHY ARE THEY SO AFRAID OF THIS MAN ?

(see next page)

Karl Gotch is not a savage villain who uses obnoxious weapons like The Claw, The Back-Breaker, The Pile-Driver, etc. Instead he is a gentle, mild-mannered, devoted family man . . .

"FAKERS!" SCOFFED THE STRAPPING YOUTH from a nearby Air Force base as he watched Karl Gotch play a cat-and-mouse game with a burly opponent in Tampa, Fla. "They're all fakers. Why, anybody could beat those bums!"

"Yeah?" his buddy said doubtfully. "Well, if you're such hot stuff, why don't **you** get in there? That guy Gotch'll pay you $1,000 if you can pin him within 20 minutes."

"That's exactly what I'm gonna do," the tall, 200-pound serviceman said cockily as he strode off to challenge Gotch. Karl, a man of impeccable manners, greeted the youth warmly. As they squared off, he even wished him luck!

The Air Force kid had a surprising amount of ring savvy, but it soon became obvious that he was nothing but a toy to the 240-pound Gotch. After playing with him for a few minutes, Karl pinned him as easily as he would a blanket.

Later, still utterly exhausted, the Air Force man told his pal: "Boy, if I ever called that guy a fake, I take it all back." His admission proved Karl's point—that critics are talking through their hats when they ridicule pro wrestlers as phonies.

Karl should know. He's beaten some of the best in the business since he came to the States from Germany in 1959. And if they were faking, Karl hopes they never get serious!

As a matter of fact, Gotch was astonished by the rough-house tactics he encountered here after he "scientifically" demolished the top stars in winning the European heavyweight championship.

"It was difficult at first to believe an opponent would kick me, jab me in the eyes, use his elbows and fists," he says.

"In this country, wrestlers even shove referees around. You try that just once in Europe and the referee would disqualify you on the spot. Then you'd be suspended.

"In Europe, they wrestle more and fight less. Over here, you have to knock out a man to win, most of the time. It does not seem to matter how you do it, just so you flatten him."

Listening to Karl talk, you wonder where he picks up his fluid command of English. No, he didn't take any courses. He simply watched American movies in Germany and hobnobbed with Yank troops during World War II.

Karl was an eager, wide-eyed youngster of 13 when he started wrestling as an amateur in his native Hamburg. He had been fird with enthusiasm after seeing matches in the gymnasium and decided that this was the sport for him.

In three years, the sandy-haired youngster astounded the entire German mat world by leaping out of the novice class and knifing through all opposition to become the **Landesmeister** – or heavyweight champion – of Germany.

Along the way, he developed his spectacular suplex hold – a dangerous maneuver which can be executed only by the most skillful of wrestlers. In one variation of this hold, he flips his foe over his head and into position for his famous "bridging" tactic (see photo).

Running out of amateur competition in Germany, Karl turned pro in 1955 and toured Europe. He had one goal in mind—to become the world's best wrestler—and he worked at it with typical German thoroughness.

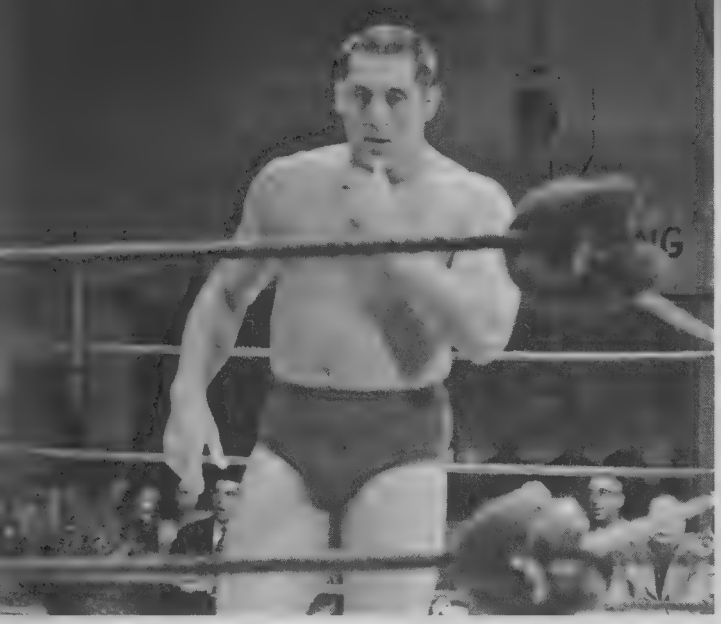
One day, Karl was talking shop with a couple of British matmen who told him about intricate catch-as-catch-can style of wrestling. Karl was intrigued by what he heard. The Britishers mentioned an Irishman, Billy Riley, whom they called "a master teacher of catch-as-catch-can."

"Where is this man Riley?" asked Karl.

"He has a school in Lancashire, England, where that style of wrestling originated," they said.

Eager to add to his repertoire, Karl hurried to Lancashire. After Riley had taught him all he knew, Gotch was ready to test his new technique against the local opposition in a gym appropriately

Gotch, who doesn't have an overly impressive physique as compared to some wrestlers, is nevertheless one of the strongest men in the business, and one of the fastest.



Interesting candid study of Karl's face as he returns to corner before start of bout in Detroit television studio.

Don Jardine has surprised look on his face as Gotch, with seemingly effortless motion, sends him crashing into the ropes.

called "the snake-pit."

Most of his opponents were tough British coal miners. "You couldn't afford to make the slightest mistake with them," Karl recalls. "They were merciless." In fact, he found them even tougher than most of the rough guys he's faced in the States.

Karl had some dangerous moments with those grimy-handed bruisers but he managed to avoid being mangled and soon mastered the knack of pouncing on them after swiftly sidestepping their bull-like rushes.

Looking for new laurels, Gotch headed for Canada, where he got his first taste of the free-wheeling, American style of roughhouse wrestling. He was jabbed, kicked, mauled, gouged—and surprised. Mostly surprised. He had never expected anything like this and it threw him off stride badly.

He caught on quickly, however, and was soon handing out more than he was taking when he suddenly ran out of competition. Oh, there were enough guys around. But somehow, they treated him like a typhoid carrier whenever he showed his face.

Karl was wondering what to do when he got word that promoter Al Haft wanted to see him in Reynoldsburg, Ohio. "I've heard a lot about you," said Haft when he arrived. "I think I can use you."

But the wily Haft, who has seen wrestlers come and go for the past fifty years, wanted to make sure that the German's

Karl uses a perfect hip-roll to dump Jardine. His mastery of such holds and maneuvers puts him in a class by himself.

Gotch is so good a wrestler, that he is that rarity in the mat world who can keep the crowd's interest using science alone.

With Jardine softened to the right degree, Gotch used a body slam to remove what remaining fight there was in Don and . . .

Pinned him by bridging under Jardine and rolling his shoulders down on the mat. Karl is one of the few men who can do this.

reputation wasn't a lot of hot air. "How about working out with one of my boys," Al asked casually.

"One of my boys" was actually one of Haft's better heavyweights. Karl not only trimmed the big guy down to size but proceeded to mutilate three of Haft's other stars—and all in less than half an hour!

The clincher came when Gotch, moving with amazing grace and speed, used his now famous suplex hold. Now Al Haft is not an easy man to impress. But Karl impressed him—in spades.

Al put him to work and the 6′2″ whiz soon captivated the local fans. He was that rare commodity in the mat world—a man without a gimmick. Just science. Pure and simple — and murderously dangerous.

Verne Gagne took one look at Karl in action and commented: "You have to give him all the credit in the world. He had to learn a new style, and he did it in record time. Right now, I would say he's one of the top wrestlers in the world."

Other experts went even further. Some hailed him as the uncrowned champion. A few went so far as to call him the "greatest German wrestler of them all"—and that takes in a lot of territory.

Things were going so well for Karl that he decided to make a fast trip back to Europe. He had two reasons: (1) he wanted to knock off six challengers for his European title, and (2) he wanted to bring his wife, Ella, and daughter, Janine, to the States.

It took him just two months to accomplish all that. And when he returned in March of 1959, he did something else. He learned that two other wrestlers had been using his real name, Karl Krauser. So he changed his to Karl Gotch, using the famous Frank Gotch as his inspiration.

He began training as never before for a shot at the heavyweight title. He bought a modest home in Reynoldsburg and equipped it with all kinds of apparatus. When the weather's bad, he works out at home. When the skies are clear, he does roadwork in the nearby Blacklick Woods.

It's a close-knit family and frequently his wife and 10-year-old daughter tag along with him. Ella has only one criticism of Karl: he refuses to display his medals properly. Karl won a few gold medals at the 1952 Olympics in Helsinki. He keeps them, with all the others he has won, in a plastic bag that once contained carrots!

His strength — and sportsman-

Not knowing what hit him, Jardine struggles to regain his feet as Gotch is declared the winner after 12 minutes 6 seconds.

The very popular wrestler — TV announcer Lord Layton interviews Karl after match.

ship – are legendary. In a match with The Great Malenko, a 245-pound brute, Karl was caught in a short-arm scissors. With his trapped arm, he lifted Malenko up to his shoulder and deposited him gently on top of the corner ring post.

He was once engaged in a slam-bang battle with wiry Antonino Rocca when the Argentinian, in an effort to inflict his famous back-breaker, injured a leg. Karl was declared the winner, but he modestly declined to accept victory under those conditions.

A fan who has seen many of Gotch's bouts sums him up this way: "He is one of the finest gentlemen it has been my privilege to meet. And if he isn't the best heavyweight since Jim Londos, I'll eat my hat."

Gotch is too nice a guy to let the fan ruin his digestion. •

THE KILLER'S FRANTIC

Every time Killer Kowalski slams his big fist into an opponent's face, or crunches his head against a ring post, he's actually taking it out on YOU for all the misery and loneliness you've caused him.

ON A RECENT DRIZZLY AFTERNOON IN NEW YORK, a tall, strapping man in a cream-colored raincoat paused outside the Cinerama Theatre to look at the display photos of "The Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm."

The Broadway crowds jostled him as they hurried by, but the giant didn't seem to mind. Deeply absorbed in the pictures, he appeared to be in another world—a world of fairyland enchantment.

Suddenly, a heavily-rouged woman, accompanied by her plump young son, bustled up to the box-office. As she was buying her tickets, the little darling spotted the big man and yelled, "Hey, ma! Lookit the freak!"

The startled giant mumbled something to himself, pulled up his collar and loped across the street to another theatre. Without bothering to see what was playing, he bought a ticket and plunged into the flickering gloom.

Being called a "freak" was an old story to Killer Kowalski. As he squeezed his 6'7", 285-pound frame into the seat, he reflected bitterly on his size. It had brought him riches – but it had brought pain, too – pain and sometimes humiliation.

The incident with the brat took him back some 16 years, when he was just getting started as a wrestler. From a sickly, scrawny

SEARCH FOR PEACE

BY STANLEY WESTON

youth plagued with a heart condition, he had—by sheer exercise – developed into an amazing physical specimen.

He was proud of his powerful arms and the huge, sloping shoulders that tapered to a narrow waist. But his pride turned to ashes as he grew self-conscious about his size.

People often stopped to stare at him. Some of the more brazen ones would shout: "Hey, how's the air up there?" Or: "Can you tell us if it's gonna snow down here?" Then they'd break up with laughter.

Once, in a moment of rare confession, the Killer said: "They look at me like I'm a curious freak. Sometimes I want to say, 'What in hell you staring at, punk?'"

But despite his reputation as a savage villain, Killer Kowalski keeps silent outside the ring, nursing his grievances in the tortured privacy of his mind.

This is the other side of Kowalski – a strange, moody "loner" who has probably stirred up more hatred than any wrestler in history.

Almost everything about him sets him apart from the average breed of wrestler. He has to buy custom suits because the ready-made don't fit. Fussy about shoes, he practically goes on safari to find a size 15 pair he likes. Even the ties he loops around his 18-inch neck are specially made. His shoulders are so broad that he has to turn sidewise to get through a door.

What sets him apart even more are his personal habits. After a particularly brutal bout, for example, he may retire to his hotel room and read himself to sleep—with the Bible!

Sometimes, when he's too charged up to read, he turns the radio up full blast to revel in the fiery, tumultuous music of Wagner—so symbolic of his own ring fury.

Battering Louis Torres on the ropes, Kowalski shows none of the tender mercies that once earned him the title, "Tarzan, King of the Mice."

Curiously enough, he combines a devout Catholicism with a deep mysticism that has led him into the tangled byways of philosophy, metaphysics and vegetarianism.

Some years ago, Kowalski found himself at a critical juncture in life. Despite his phenomenal mat success, he was desperately unhappy.

"I was groping for something —I didn't know what," he says.

In despair, he turned to books and chanced upon something written by Saint-Germain, who preached the "I am" philosophy of clean living. Kowalski promptly adopted it.

His heavy reading produced another change in him—one that almost terminated his wrestling career. "I decided," he recalls, "that eating meat did something to the thought process that retarded the clear analysis of problems."

This decision hurdled him into his vegetarian phase. He started losing weight at an alarming rate. Before long, he was down to a mere 165 pounds.

At this weight, he didn't have enough "beef" to handle a one-armed opponent, let alone those bloodthirsty behemoths who were spoiling to even the score for previous batterings.

He had always been lean and hungry-looking, with hollow cheeks and a lantern jaw. But now he became positively gaunt, and his voice, normally soft and pleasant, developed a querulous, raspy tone.

Friends tried to dissuade him from continuing his crazy diet but he shrugged them off. He just hadn't hit the right balance of fruits, vegetables, nuts and grains. As soon as he found the formula, he said – boom! – he'd bounce back stronger than ever.

Meantime, however, he'd bounced himself right out of wrestling. His tremendous weight loss was supposed to have been

While experimenting with a tricky vegetarian diet, Killer haunted vitamin pill counters and health food shops.

Kowalski got to hate the nomadic life—hustling from one hotel to the next in a dreary tour of the mat circuit.

Overcome by loneliness, the Killer tries to find solace by escaping to the make-believe world of the movies.

Killer used to be bothered by "wish you were dead" wreaths. But he has learned to accept them as part of the game.

responsible for his sudden retirement. But the process of erosion had begun long before that and stemmed not from dietary problems but from a deep, soul-searching struggle.

It may seem incredible that a man engaged in the primitive pursuit of bone-crushing should be concerned with so fragile a thing as a soul.

What was bothering this giant? What powerful force could have compelled him to quit when he was riding the crest of fame and fortune?

To answer that question, you have to go back to his childhood days . . . Wladek Kowalski, son of Polish immigrants, quiet, moody, self-effacing – insulating himself from the barbed insults about his gawky, anemic build . . .

Wladek Kowalski, then 140 pounds of skin and bones stretched over a 6′2″ frame, trying out for the high school basketball team and fighting back the tears because he was so weak he couldn't even hold the ball . . .

Wladek Kowalski, seriously toying with the idea of becoming a priest as he pored over his engineering textbooks at Assumption College in his home town of Windsor, Ontario . . .

Windsor is just a long flying tackle distance from Detroit, where he had his first pro bout after learning the ropes from Bert Ruby, promoter and ex-matman.

By this time, as a result of intensive weight-lifting sessions at the YMCA, Kowalski had sprouted to full height and fleshed out to a magnificent 265 pounds, with smooth, rippling muscles.

But though he looked like a tiger, he fought like a mouse and usually took a terrible beating. "Phooey on this," he told himself. "I'm quitting."

One thing changed his mind—the look and feel of 10 crisp $10 bills. "Hoo, hoo," he said, "this is more money than I make in two weeks from my job." (He was an electrician with the Ford Motor Co. at the time.)

It is ironic that Kowalski, who became the terror of the ring, started out as a clean wrestler

(text continued on page 66)

"People look at me like I'm a freak. Sometimes, I want to say, 'What in hell you staring at, punk'?"

"I never try to deliberately injure a man, but in defending myself, I use any tactics I feel are justified . . ."

"I was unhappy and groping for something — I didn't know what. Then I found a book that changed my whole life."

(please turn the page)

"I never deliberately try to injure a man," says Killer, preparing to bash Ed Carpentier's head into a ring post.

Carpentier, the acrobatic Frenchman, has a tough time trying to convince the Killer that he doesn't need any flying lessons.

"I'm a one-man roughhouse gang," says Killer and proceeds to prove it with a vicious knee-smash to Torres' back.

The fans suck in their breath as Kowalski comes crashing down on helpless Torres. They abuse him unmercifully for such tactics.

Ed comes down for a landing but misses the field and provides a perfect target for Kowalski's flailing fists.

Louis Torres, gets a taste of the Killer's vegetable-powered attack.

The Killer raises his hands in victory—but there are no cheers for the victor . . . only a loud chorus of boos.

"The fans may hate me — but they come to see a battle. And I give it to them!"

(*continued on page* 66)

Cowboy's Bloody Home-coming

San Angelo, Texas, proved a fitting battleground for the climax to this long-smoldering feud.

HURRYING HOME to San Angelo, Texas, Cowboy Bob Ellis clenched and unclenched his big fists. Ordinarily, a home-coming for Bob meant rejoicing with old friends. This time, his purpose was vastly different. He was going home to run down a hated enemy – the masked devil himself, El Mephisto. As it turned out, he also ran into the goriest bloodbath of his career.

In Texas, Mephisto had been heaping abuse on Bob while Cowboy was away on tour. The masked giant (6′5″), blasting all opposition in a blazing trek through the Amarillo territory, had scoffed: "If Ellis is so good, why does he always run away whenever he knows I'm coming to town? I'll tell you why. He's yellow!" There were other cracks, of course, but this is the only one we can print.

You can imagine Cowboy's reaction when he got wind of it. "Get me that big braggart!" he roared. "I'll build a bonfire around him and send him back to Hades." Bob wanted him so badly that he demanded a one-fall, no-holds-barred "Death Match." News of the grudge battle leapfrogged from cactus to cactus and a sell-out crowd jammed the San Angelo arena.

The front row ringside seats had been removed to give the contestants more room in case the battlers spilled out of the ring. It was a good thing, too – because most of the action did explode outside the ring, though there was plenty inside, as the exclusive photos on these pages reveal.

Bob knew Mephisto was no pushover, but he never expected him to put up so savage a battle. The 341-pound behemoth drew first blood by clobbering Ellis on the forehead. He kept tearing at it viciously while Cowboy pound-

After both fell out of the ring, the enraged Cowboy lunged at the masked giant, grabbed his head and slammed him against the base of the ring.

A rip-snorting flying tackle upsets Mephisto and sends him hurtling through the air, then crashing to mat.

ed back, turning Mephisto's face into a pulpy smear of red. At one point, Bob ripped off the devil's black mask only to find a white one underneath.

The white mask was sodden with blood when the match ended in a rip-snortin' exchange on the cold cement floor. Big Bob finally slammed the hulking Mephisto to the ground and plopped on top of him for the pin. He had made good his vow to chase the devil out of Texas. But no one could doubt that the devil had given him one helluva hot time!

(see next page)

Mephisto, who proved the stronger of the two, body-slammed Ellis to the mat shortly after the brutal bout began.

His left eyebrow taped from a wound received in previous bout, Bob's right brow now drips blood as he struggles to beat foe back into the ring.

Mephisto swings roundhouse right at Ellis as Bob retreats back into the ring.

Bob pins Mephisto. But fall does not count since it was made outside the ring. But moments later, Ellis did it where it did count and won the match.

Mephisto tries to run away but can't quite evade Bob's clutches as they scurry around the ringside.

Ellis, covered with blood and badly dazed, is declared the winner to the hometown crowd's utter delight.

FARMER McGRUDER

OH, THAT FARMER! Farmer McGruder, we mean. The ruffest, tuffest little grappler who ever blasted out of the Ozarks — or anyplace else, for that matter. Whenever his name is on a mat card in his home town of Pine Bluff, Ark., you can't keep the good citizens away for a barrel of fiery corn likker.

Farmer has the same effect everywhere he goes. He looks like a compact-sized Burl Ives, the singing troubadour, with his benign face and trim black beard. But when he's crossed, he turns into a savage, clawing terror — a sight that sends the crowd into a frenzy.

McGruder, who's 23 and weighs 96 pounds, is an exception in a game where monickers bear little if any relationship to the men who adopt them. He started out as a farmer and, oddly enough, is still a farmer. With this difference: his wrestling earnings have enabled him to extend his holdings so that he now owns one of the nation's biggest farms.

McGruder never had the slightest intention of becoming a wrestler. One day, a friend invited him to a midget match in Pine Bluff. McGruder, a hard-working man of the soil, was dubious about wasting his time on what he then considered frivolous entertainment. "Hell's bells, I've got work to do!" he said. But he went anyway.

Farmer regretted his decision when the bout was cancelled because one midget had failed to show up. But the fans, weren't going to be denied. "Put McGruder in there!" they yelled.

Farmer was the most surprised man in the house. The only wrestling he had ever done was with balky pigs and goats. But he couldn't disappoint his pals. It took him just 15 seconds to pin his foe. The Farmer had hoed himself a new career. . . .

DON'T JUDGE TH

SIX EXCITING YOUNG MIDGET STARS WHO ARE

LITTLE BOY BLUE

ON LITTLE BOY BLUE'S dresser is a sign that says: THINK BIG. He picked it up in a novelty store as a gag but it turned out to have a miraculous effect on his career. Blue comes from the wide-open spaces of Oklahoma, where everybody — well, nearly everybody — THINKS BIG. This is the famous Sooner State, named after those intrepid pioneers who jumped the deadline for staking land claims.

Those Sooners are real hustlers —and Blue is no exception. Like most Oklahomans, he grew up on a farm. If you know anything about farming, you know what a tough life it is—rising in the dark, tending to a million chores, roping cattle and maneuvering giant tractors over vast farmlands. It's rough, rugged work. Builds muscles. Develops the wind. Gives a guy a tremendous sense of achievement that, somehow, compensates for the utter exhaustion.

Blue played it smart. He knew he had no future in farming. But wrestling? Man, that offered a mammoth opportunity. But Blue didn't wait for his chance. He stormed out and grabbed it, with all the gutsy determination of his forebears.

In his very first match, he goggled the onlookers with his resilient strength. Only 98 pounds and 4'4" tall, he overpowered his foe. And why not? Roping cattle had given him tremendous shoulder leverage; riding the range had put sinews of steel into his stubby legs. When Blue clamps on his scissors hold, his opponents yowl for mercy.

Take it from N. J. Dalton of Roanoke, Va., who manages 22-year-old Blue along with the five other midget wrestlers mentioned in this article, Little Boy Blue not only thinks big — he ACTS BIG!

CHICO SANTANA STARED at the green water, sparkling under a blazing Puerto Rico sun, and frowned. In his ears was the ringing laughter of tourists frolicking in the oceanside pool of a flossy big hotel. A mighty surge of ambition flooded his little body. Some day, he thought, he would have enough money to live like those tourists—travel to far off places, eat in the best restaurants, wear elegant clothes. . . .

That was more than 10 years ago. Today, at 26, Chico is well on his way to realizing that dream as a result of sensational mat successes in Canada and the U. S. But he didn't do it by scuffing his shoes in the sand, wishing and hoping. He put away his centavos, watched them grow into pesos and, after what seemed like a long, long time, he had enough to buy a plane ticket to New York.

New York! He had always envisioned it as a shining city beckoning with a golden finger. But Chico was a realist as well as a dreamer and he knew he had to work hard to get somewhere, even in a rich country like America.

In his youth, he used to rip out pictures of wrestlers from whatever newspapers and magazines he could scrounge. To Chico, only 4 feet tall and 96 pounds, their muscular bodies represented an unattainable ideal. But the Big City changed his outlook — gave him ideas big enough to match his courage.

He decided to become a mat star. Before long, his gym workouts caught the eyes of New York promoters. Since he turned pro about five years ago, Chico has been doing plenty of traveling. But for a fellow with wanderlust, he has a peculiar secret ambition. You'd never guess what it is. Chico wants to buy a motel!

CHICO SANTANA

EM BY THEIR SIZE

ADDING ZEST TO THE WRESTLING SCENE . . .

FRENCHY SEMARD

WHAT DOES THE WORD "French" suggest to you? Amour? Right. But what has amour got to do with wrestling? Plenty — in this case! Marcel "Frenchy" Semard is only 101 pounds and so small you can slip him into your side pocket and close the flap. But he's big—mighty big—in other ways . . . in muscles, in dazzling mat ability and (here we go again!) in the love department.

Look at that baby face. The dolls who come in droves to see him wrestle take one look at it and swoon. Every day, the 25-year-old Don Juan from Montreal, Canada, gets dozens of letters from panting admirers. They all start out with rapturous phrases about how wonderful he is, and usually wind up asking for his hand — in marriage!

Ask Frenchy how he got into wrestling and he'll tell you he drifted into it after building up a king-sized set of muscles felling lofty trees in the frigid lumber camps of Northern Canada. He felt lost among the bellowing giants who cleared the forests. Not outclassed, mind you—just lost. Those fellows didn't care how they chopped down those towering trees. One day, Frenchy figured, they might not see him and send a tree crashing down on him.

So, when somebody told him about midget wrestling, Marcel decided he would like that. Before long, he was chopping down people instead of trees—in the ring, of course. Back in the States after a whirlwind tour of Europe, where he won 24 of 26 matches, Frenchy is "Boston-crabbing" (his favorite hold) his way all over the country, proving the old adage that big things sometimes come in small packages.

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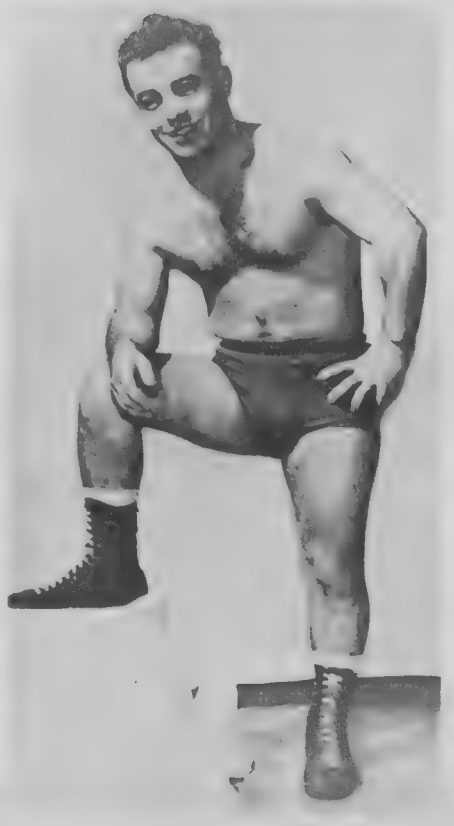


PEE WEE LOPEZ

HIS BODY BENT in a tense arc, Pee Wee Lopez dug his heels into the horse's flanks and flashed his whip. He was just a prayer ahead as he thundered down the home stretch of the Mexico City racetrack. "Come on! Come on!" the fans shouted wildly.

Pee Wee was a cauldron of emotions as he sighted victory. Then it happened — his horse stumbled. Pee Wee went crashing to the turf and was lost in a blinding flurry of hooves. . . .

When he awakened in the hospital, he saw a doctor bending over him—a doctor who tried to tell him, as gently as possible, that he had torn his back muscles and probably would never ride again.

Anybody else would have wallowed in self-pity and resigned himself to a life of fragile inactivity. Not Pee Wee. On leaving the hospital, he asked the doctor what he could do to regain the strength in his crippled back. "Try some weight-lifting," he was told. "But be very carefull"

Pee Wee attacked the weights with fierce determination. Slowly, painfully, the muscles responded. Soon he felt a tremendous new power surging through his 104-pound body. One day in the gym, a pro grappler looked him over appreciatively and said: "Hey, you look like a strong little guy. Why don't you go in for wrestling?"

Pee Wee did — and blasted his way to the Midget Championship of Mexico. Today, at 25, with a world tour under his belt, he is considered one of the hottest in the game. Ask Haystacks Calhoun, among others. Says the mighty Calhoun: "Pee Wee is the best little wrestler I have ever seen—and I have seen them all."

It's easy to agree with Haystacks after watching Lopez apply his "Sapatia" hold. That's just another name for the "Boston Crab" — spiced with red hot Mexican pepper!

TINY BELL

IT TOOK A NERVOUS breakdown to get Tiny Bell into wrestling. Sounds strange, doesn't it? You look at this amiable, easy-going fellow and wonder how anything could bother him enough to jangle his nerve tips. Tiny himself was surprised when he started getting the screaming meemies.

Bell, who hails from Roanoke, Va., was once an interior decorator. He liked the work well enough and prospered. In time, however, he was swamped with jobs and went frantic trying to keep up with them.

One day, something snapped. "Boy," he told himself, "I'd better see a doc." The doctor thumped his chest and back, tapped his knees with a little hammer, then quipped: "You're as sound as a bell. But I would suggest that you take a long rest."

Tiny (real name Hugh Bell Meadow) hit the road to Canada. He was supposed to be resting but the inactivity was too much for him and he took in a midget wrestling show. He was deeply impressed. "Hmm," he thought, "this beats interior decorating any day."

Back home in Roanoke, he got to work with consuming zeal. Hanging drapes? Fussing with color schemes? Not on your life. Tiny, all 98 pounds of him, started building his muscles — the kind that have earned him a reputation as strongman of the midgets. Wrestling manager N. J. Dalton took one look at his bulging biceps and powder-keg legs—and Tiny was on his way.

In the past four years, Bell has toured the entire eastern part of the U. S., leaving a trail of tough scrappers in his wake, many of them victims of his pet "slingshot" hold. Comes summer, though, and he knocks off. Tiny, who's 27, likes wrestling too much to risk another bout with his nerves. And, naturally, the only vacation spot for him is North Bay, Canada—where he learned he really wasn't cut out to be an interior decorator.

Former world champion Dick Hutton cries out in pain as The Destroyer twists his head in wild bout at Los Angeles.

HOME LIFE OF A DESTROYER

Take a look at the mellow side of that hooded wildman who all but murders his terrified victims.

This is the side of the fierce masked man the public never sees. He plants a gentle kiss on lips of wife, Wilma.

see next page

(continued)

HOME LIFE OF A DESTROYER

After Wilma finished making a new mask (red with white trim) The Destroyer checks to see if size of eye and mouth openings are right.

Son Kurt nestles in mighty arms of his famous dad as Wilma makes sure the boy's head remains above water during day's first dunking.

Wilma good-naturedly says that cooking "For my two boys is a full time job. But my husband is good about it. He eats anything."

He guards his identity so closely that the mask remains on until he walks into his bedroom, locks the door and draws the shades.

UP AND DOWN THE WEST COAST, The Destroyer has been striking terror into the hearts of his opponents. But at home, this massive hunk of wrestling fury is the gentlest of family men. You'd never know it, though, to look at him, for he wears a cloth mask that makes him appear ferocious enough to eat little children.

The Destroyer terrified neighbors when they first spotted him on the spacious grounds of his modern California home. They were somewhat mollified when he explained that the mask was a professional disguise. But they never quite got over feeling queer whenever they saw him poking his head out a window, mowing the lawn or thrashing the length of his pool with the precision of an Olympic swimmer.

His wife, Wilma, and son Kurt, 2½, are so used to seeing his mask-covered face, however, that they are sometimes startled when he takes it off. He rarely does, though. He practically sleeps in it and his pretty, dark-haired Wilma thinks nothing of waking up to find a "monster" snoozing away alongside her.

Actually, Wilma has two "monsters" to contend with. Kurt tries to look just as ferocious as dad by wearing a junior-sized copy of the famous mask. It presents a ticklish problem for Wilma whenever she wants to kiss her "boys." Literally. Those masks really tickle!

So far, Kurt has just a white mask. The Destroyer has a white and a black one—and he's just as careful of them as he is of his muscular body. Wilma sews the masks, using special fabrics. But The Destroyer designs them and supervises practically every stitch.

When he's not designing masks, frolicking in the pool or pitching in with the dishes (his big mitts haven't dropped a plate yet!), The Destroyer is busy keeping in shape with an assist from little Kurt, who squeals with delight as dad gives him a seesaw ride on his powerful legs.

After an active day, The Destroyer is ready for a big meal. As strong as he is, he knows enough to stay out of the kitchen.

That's Wilma's private domain, and she doesn't want any Destroyer—large or small—messing around with her secret recipes.

The boys work up a terrific appetite sniffing the fragrant aromas floating out of the kitchen and they dig into their food with great zest. But the Junior Destroyer is no match for Senior and frequently he just sits there in his high chair, looking on in amazement at dad's gargantuan intake.

For relaxation, The Destroyer dabbles with brush and paint. Not the house-painting kind. This is artistic stuff—and he's quite good at it, creating some beautiful seascapes. When he takes his artistry into the ring, though, the effect is not beautiful at all —as any one of his victims will tell you!

(see next page)

Young Kurt loves this trick "My daddy does every night." But he doesn't enjoy it any more than Daddy does.

Everytime Wilma sees her husband carrying Kurt like this, she goes into a rage. "You'll tear his arm out of its socket!" she cries. "Who do you think he is, Fred Blassie! Dick Hutton! Now stop it!"

Oh yes, Junior has a mask of his own. Not just one. He has them in all colors, including gold and silver.

Kurt watches proudly as his dad does his daily hundred push-ups in the living room. When he finishes, the boy will try. He can do five already.

Up goes Kurt as Wilma manages a worried smile. Says The Destroyer: "Sometimes, when I'm smacking a guy all over the ring, I stop and wonder, does he have a son like my Kurt? Then I let up a little on him. Maybe even let him get away. I'd hate to kill a boy's father."

The Destroyer is a great joker. When Wilma made a new kind of soup, he lifted the first spoonful to her mouth and said, "You eat first. I have so many people wanting to kill me I can't take chances. Not even with you!"

Landscape painting is The Destroyer's favorite pastime, next to taking Kurt swimming, that is. Wilma tells him that the sea gull's wing needs more shadow, which he adds with an expert twist of his brush.

(Right) This is the frightening sight that greets The Destroyer's opponents, many of whom are beaten even before the bell rings.

VERNE GAGNE

WRESTLING REVUE'S PIN UP SERIES / NUMBER 12

The Grind Behind The Glamor

To strengthen neck and shoulder muscles, Karen exerts maximum conflicting pressures — chin against arm. She does this exercise seventy times every day, credits it with making her practically immune to headlocks.

Training according to a rigid, time-proved routine, pretty Karen Kellogg tortures herself to keep her rocketing career on schedule.

BEADS OF PERSPIRATION GLISTENED on the pretty, blue-eyed blonde's face as she strained and heaved on her carpeted living room floor. She put so much effort into her movements that you could almost hear her muscles whisper in pain.

Watching her carefully from a nearby chair was bespectacled Billy Wolfe, the veteran promoter and father of girl wrestling. Now and then, Billy would murmur softly: "That's fine, child, just fine . . ." She would beam at him and then redouble her efforts.

Finally, Karen Kellogg, 18-year-old wrestling sensation from Charles City, Iowa, finished the rigid set of exercises Billy had laid out for her—the same exacting routine that had made super champions of Mildred Burke, Nell Stewart and June Byers.

It was a punishing program, but Karen was eager for more. "Billy," she said, "I'd like to work out in the ring—to loosen up." "All right, child," Billy said kindly. And off they trooped to the musty Old Memorial Hall in Columbus, Ohio. There, Karen went through the paces that have catapulted her into wrestling's top ranks.

In these exclusive photos, WRESTLING REVUE has captured every facet of her exhausting program. After her workout, Karen plopped wearily into a chair. But the look of determination never left her lovely face.

"Billy's killing me with his exercises," she said, "but I don't care. I want to become as great as Mildred and the others." But even more than that, she said: "I want to make Billy proud of me." That, to Karen, is almost as good as winning the championship!

(see next page)

Karen's pretty face shows strain of arduous arm exercise designed to help her against tortures of the hammerlock. She presses down with her shoulders and up with her arms.

Pillow takes the place of an opponent in this exercise which has already doubled the strength in her legs.

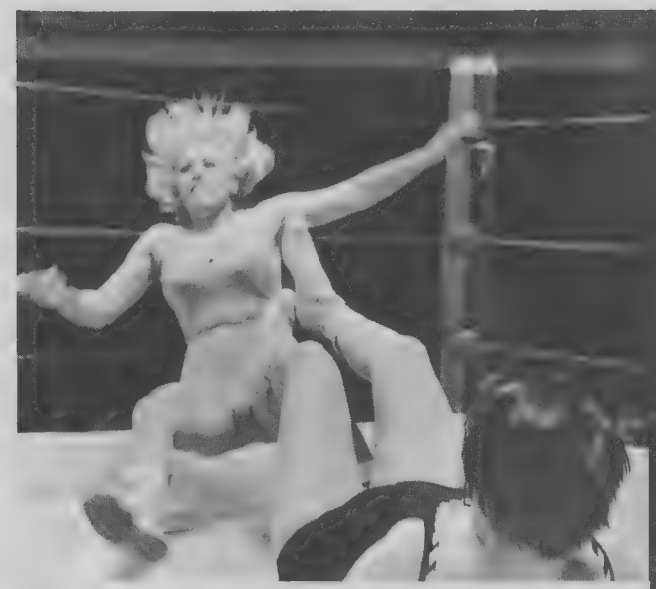
Her magnificent body silhouetted by early morning light, Kellogg uses medium size bar bells to develop legs and back.

Her great bridge has often saved Karen from defeat.

This "rocker" helps make body agile and flexible.

Master teacher Billy Wolfe tells Karen and sparring partner Beverly Long (center) which holds to practice in gym workout.

Kellogg has determined look on her face as she waits for Wolfe's signal to begin workout.



Long breaks out of leg lock by kicking Karen across ring.

Wolfe ordered Beverly to keep attacking Kellogg's legs.

With a lightning-fast twist of her powerful body, Karen catches Beverly in a headlock and sends her crashing to the mat.

Workout over, Kellog rests and waits for Billy Wolfe to explain what she did wrong. He stresed the fact that she muffed several opportunities to score a pin.

Long is trapped in dangerous position because Karen is turning leg hold into a dreaded "Boston Crab."

The Women! The Women! They Drive Me Crazy

Handsome Mario Moreno hasn't met the man he thinks can whip him. But those women! Will they ever learn to keep their manicured paws off him?

With a graceful flip of his body, Mario breaks out of armlock held by Bengy Ramirez.

With anxious young fans looking on, Moreno is interviewed by pretty reporter before a bout.

THE HANDSOME YOUTH TENSED the moment he saw the cars draw up to the curb outside the jewelry shop in Mexico City. "Tourists," he muttered angrily, "nothing but tourists!"

Grabbing a tiny paint brush, he dabbed savagely at the silver pin he had just designed — a striking object that bore all the artistry of his Aztec ancestors.

After entangling Ramirez' head in a chair, Mario steps back to study the results.

(Left) From high atop Ramirez' shoulders, Moreno lets out a wild yell before flipping Bengy down to the mat with thunderous crash.

(Right) A booming right to the chin seems to freeze Ramirez in his tracks. Mario followed with drop kick that hurt Bengy.

Mario Mareno, a chunky lad, didn't despise tourists. It was just that they interfered with his work. Not the men . . . they just wandered around, hoping their wives wouldn't spend too much.

But the women! And their moist-lipped daughters! Manuel, his boss, would fawn over them — displaying trays of delicately-wrought pins, earrings, bracelets.

see next page

Moreno, who rarely looks bad in the ring, was made to look rather foolish by Tito Kopa who rolled out of danger when Mario tried to fall on him.

Kopa hurled Moreno out of the ring and into ringsider's laps. Here the enraged Mario prepares to leap back into the ring.

"Oh, how beautiful," the women would murmur. Then, of course, Manuel had to show off. "I'm so glad you like them," he would say, baring a mouthful of teeth. "They were designed by young Mario, here."

While Mario blushed furiously, the women would lean over his shoulder, reeking with perfume and breathing hard. But they weren't looking at the jewelry. They were looking at HIM! "What a nice boy," they would say to Manuel. "So handsome, so talented . . ."

"Dios mio,' Mario mumbled. How long could he take this? He had never wanted to be a jewelry designer. He had his mind set on being a doctor. But that took money — much more than his parents could afford. So, with heavy heart, he gave up his dream.

In high school, he poked along without spirit. Even his girl friend, a vivacious, sparkling-eyed senorita named Dolores, failed to pep him up. "Mario," she would squeal, "let's go hear the mariachis (troubadours) at Xochimilco on Sunday!" But Mario would shake his head glumly.

Former mat great Blackie Guzman, who manages Moreno, points out improvement in Mario's arm, the result of using weights.

Guzman shows Morena the proper method of applying an armlock. Mario gives Blackie all the credit for his quick success.

Mareno's chief interest those days lay in his work at the local YMCA, where he coached youngsters in baseball, basketball and football. One afternoon, he dashed to a corner of the gym to retrieve a ball. Some kids nearby were puffing and grunting on a wrestling mat.

Mario looked on with growing fascination. When one hefty youngster neatly back-flipped his opponent, Mareno couldn't contain his enthusiasm. "That's magnifico," he said to the coach. "Por favor, can you show me how to do it?"

The coach was happy to oblige. Mario tried a few holds and was amazed at the ease with which he pinned a heavy, strapping youth. Later that afternoon, he practiced his holds on some buddies — with the same result.

Decking his pals had the same exhilarating effect as a triple shot of tequila gulped down with a pinch of salt. For Mario, life bubbled with promise again. He would become a wrestler and travel to strange new lands . . . flexing his mighty muscles and basking in thunderous applause . . .

His folks were aghast when he told them he planned to take a course in wrestling. "Wrestling?" they gasped. "How can you consider such a thing? Don't be foolish. Learn a good trade. Look at Senora Gonzalez's son . . . he's earning a nice living as a jewelry designer . . . "

To please her, curly-headed Mario tried his hand at the ancient craft. He displayed a natural ability, his strong fingers wielding the delicate instruments with deft sureness.

But he couldn't wait to rush off after work for his "Y" wrestling lessons. One day, his instructor called him over. "Mario," he said, throwing an arm around the husky youth's broad shoulders, "I think you have learned everything we can teach you here. Now you need experience. How would you like to wrestle as an amateur?"

To Mario, it was like saying: "How would you like to make a million bucks?" Quitting his job against his parents' strenuous protests, he toured South America, pinning one leading middleweight after another. Five years later, tough and seasoned at the age of 19, he was ready for his first professional match. (*continued on page* 68)

Nineteen top wrestlers compete for a grand prize of $2,400 in Detroit's..... NIGHT

THE EVENING OF DEC. 8, 1962 was a night Detroit mat fans will not soon forget. They will remember it as "The Night of the Big Spectacle," in which some of the world's top wrestlers were pitted against each other (16 bouts in all) in what was officially billed as "The Lord Layton International Tournament," although Layton himself was not one of the principals.

Held in Detroit's impressive Coco Convention Arena before about 8,000 screaming men, women and children, the bouts got more brutal and exciting as wrestlers were eliminated and the tournament swung into its final rounds.

Rules for the big tournament were carefully worked out by the promoters, Barnett-Doyle Corporation, and designed to give each contestant a fair chance to win and to ensure that there would be a winner.

TOURNAMENT RULES:

1 — Pairings for the first round to be determined by drawing lots.
2 — Every bout will go one fall or to the 15-minute time limit. Should a bout last the full fifteen minutes, a decision will be rendered.

In opening round, Mark Lewin (right) eliminated The Sheik.

Alberto Torres (right) was chopped down by Taro Sakuro.

OF THE BIG SPECTACLE

3 – Losers will be automatically eliminated from further competition, and the winners will continue to face each other until only one man survives.

4 – The final bout, which will determine the tournament winner, will be one fall to an ABSOLUTE FINISH—NO TIME LIMIT.

5 – Each contestant accepted for entry by the promoters will post an entry fee of $100. The winner of the tournament will receive the combined entry fees ($1,900) plus an additional $500 which will be donated by the promoters. The full cash prize will be presented to the winner in the ring at the tournament's conclusion.

THE CONTESTANTS:

Red Lyons, Canada -	235 lbs.
Mark Lewin, N. Y. -	227 lbs.
The Sheik, Syria -	231 lbs.
Taro Sakuro, Japan -	223 lbs.
Jack Lanza, Minn. -	226 lbs.
Moose Evans, Minn. -	320 lbs.
Don Leo Jonathan, Salt Lake City -	282 lbs.
Czaya Nandor, Hungary -	224 lbs.
Emile Dupree, Canada -	231 lbs.
Pierre LaBelle, Canada -	241 lbs.
Big Bill Miller, Columbus -	281 lbs.
Crusher Kowalski, N. Y. -	261 lbs.
Alberto Torres, Mexico -	223 lbs.
Ramon Torres, Mexico -	231 lbs.
The Great Kudo, Japan -	244 lbs.
Sam Steamboat, Hawaii -	240 lbs.
Sweet Daddy Siki, West Indies -	241 lbs.
Gino Morella, Italy -	268 lbs.
Fred Blassie, Atlanta -	244 lbs.

(continued on next page)

Ramon Torres, Alberto's brother, beat Jack Lanza (down).

Fred Blassie brought down big Moose Evans with sharp kicks.

Red Lyons (right) started off fast against Big Bill Miller . . .

. . . But Miller (with combination hold on Red) won the match.

(continued)

In the first round of bouts, the following men were eliminated: Lyons, Lanza, Kowalski, Steamboat, Alberto Torres, Siki, LaBelle, Kudo, Morella and The Sheik.

In the second round, Jonathan lost to Blassie, Lewin lost to Miller, Ramon Torres defeated Dupree, Blassie (wrestling twice in this round) won over Evans.

In the third round, Nandor upset Miller, Sakuro topped Ramon Torres.

This left only three men still in contention: Blassie, Sakuro and Nandor.

The officials picked Blassie to face Nandor, with the winner to take on Sakuro in the grand finale. In the bruising, though short, match Nandor was awarded the victory by disqualification over Blassie, and then went back to defeat Sakuro to become the tournament winner.

(continued on next page)

Don Leo Jonathan's leg was heavily taped when he met Blassie.

Miller then took on Mark Lewin (up) in second round of tourney . . .

. . . And, after a short but bruising battle, Bill won out.

Blassie kept working on Don Leo's bad leg, soon had him helpless.

Unable to stand the torture, Jonathan was finally forced to quit.

Bill Miller (right) then took on popular Czaya Nandor.

Nandor, a brilliant Hungarian star, made Miller (up) miss often.

Nandor gives Blassie taste of his own medicine by stomping him.

Blassie (foreground) started fast, but faded after ten minutes.

Nandor (in air) sprung major upset when he won the decision.

With only three men now in contention, Nandor (rt.) met Blassie.

In desperate attempt to win, Blassie tried to break Czaya's leg.

Nandor (left) wound up the winner when Fred was disqualified.

(*continued on page* 62)

Miller as Miller

AS THE GIANT WRESTLER in the crimson hood shouldered his way through the milling crowd, a wispy old lady hurried up to him and thrust out her autograph book.

Curtly, he waved it aside. "I don't give out autographs," he snapped, his eyes glowering through the holes of his mask.

A reporter for a Minneapolis paper gasped at this breach of manners. "Surely," he told the grappler, "you can't be so callous as to turn down a request like this."

Relenting, the giant reluctantly signed the book. "At least," he said, "she didn't come tearing at me with a 2-by-6 board like one of them did."

Who was this brute who got the "2 by 6" treatment – and worse – everywhere he appeared? He called himself the "Mysterious Mr. M," or – more simply – just "Mr. M."

He was so violently disliked that when a recent poll was taken among the world's leading mat performers, he won hands down as the "meanest, roughest, toughest."

From MILLER to MR.

BY JAMES ALLAN

It was highly profitable and, in some ways, fun while it lasted. But now the long masquerade is over for big Bill Miller.

At the crest of his fame as a hooded mystery man, "M" was asked if he regretted the lonely life he was forced to lead while dodging the avidly curious. "No," he said bluntly.

Didn't he ever feel a secret craving for popularity? "M," who had been scooping up about $75,000 a year for his acts of terrorism, laughed mirthlessly. "With that kind of dough," he rasped, "I can't afford to be popular."

On another occasion, he growled: "I have a natural talent for making enemies. I don't like people in any capacity. I'll go

Miller as Mr. M.

1,000 miles out of my way to eat if it means avoiding people."

An exaggeration? Sure. But the statement indicated the fervor of his feelings. As for the fans, they hated his guts and clamored to see him get his comeuppance.

They clamored so hard, as a matter of fact, that when the masked behemoth invaded Omaha, Neb., about a year ago, he set a one-season record of 165,000 paid admissions for 25 shows.

Commenting on the secret of his magnetism, a wrestling reporter said: "He is just about the meanest maverick to hit the Omaha scene . . . Two years ago, Dick the Bruiser was the big draw. Last season, the Japanese terror, Mitsu Arakawa, kept the fans slobbering for justice. But that 'Mr. M' – he's just too much."

It didn't seem possible that "M" could get meaner—but he did as he romped through the Midwest, challenging all comers and barring no holds.

"Where are those tough and rough guys who were supposed to rule this territory?" sneered the 6′5″, 300-pound brute when he

"M"– and Back Again.

hit St. Paul and Minneapolis.

"I've been around four weeks and can't find anybody willing to wrestle me. I've practically begged five guys to get into the ring with me but they all say they're 'busy.' "

One guy who wasn't "busy" was Roy McClarity. After the bout, he moaned: "The guy just isn't human. He seems immune to pain and his strength amazed me."

"M" had to dangle hard cash—$1,000 to be exact—to lure other victims. They came forth slowly and, one after another, they failed to pin "M" within the specified 20-minute time limit.

One man, however, offered to wrestle him for nothing. It was a rash gesture. But then, Hard-Boiled Haggerty was too hot for revenge to be concerned about money.

H. B. had built up a blazing hatred for "M" since the mystery man had put him out of commission. "I want to pay him back for what he did to me," Haggerty fumed.

The bout was billed as a "death watch" to determine pro wrestling supremacy in Minneapolis. "That's the only way to settle their hard feelings," said promoter Wally Karbo.

In a death match, the winner is the guy who walks away under his own power. Haggerty tried his damnedest, but he couldn't break "M's" 19-bout winning streak.

When "M" went after Verne Gagne, one of the best in the business, the fans licked their chops and said gleefully: "Now M will get his lumps."

Verne and the mysterious one met on a cold, raw night in January, 1962. The turning point in that furious bout came when Gagne tried to ram "M" into a turnbuckle. *(continued on next page)*

"Wrestling is fine for some guys. But for me, it's just a means to an end. . . .

"I got a big kick out of being Mr. M. . . .

Referee Maurice LaPointe stepped in to separate them. Gagne lost his balance and toppled over with "M" on top of him. Before the stunned Gagne could recover, "M" nailed him to the canvas.

In Minnesota, Verne's stamping grounds, this was tantamount to treason. Now everybody wanted a crack at the brute.

Said one matman: "We're tired of that guy setting his own rules in every match. It's about time someone ripped off his mask and relieved him of that $1,000."

"M" laughed wolfishly and upped his prize to $2,000 "to give those lugs an added incentive." Next in line was a fast-rising "aerialist" named Doug Gilbert.

The crowd went wild when Doug pinned the Hooded One in 16:52. He walked off with the prize money but, under the terms of the bout, "M" retained his mask.

"M" kept the Twin Cities in a fever of excitement as he shrugged off the lone "setback" and started chewing up a flock of new victims.

Mauled in the process were a couple of old ones—Gilbert and Gagne. After using a "backbreaker" to stop Doug in 24:13, "M" arrogantly refused to meet Verne again.

"I've defeated him three or four straight times now," the masked terror said, "and that's proof enough that he's slipped and is on his way down."

Verne burned. As usual, he had accepted his last bout on "M's" terms – Gagne was barred from using his dreaded Sleeper hold.

The masked man had concocted a clever plan and he put it into effect the moment the bout got under way. The idea? To goad Verne into applying The Sleeper, thus causing him to be disqualified.

But he almost outfoxed himself. "M" got a little too exuberant when he belted Verne with a chair – and referee Larry Hennig moved in to disqualify HIM!

Verne would have none of it. "I don't want to win that way," he told Hennig. "I want to beat that mug the regular way—"

"M" promptly set to work again, butting Gagne across the ring. As Verne staggered under each butt, one fan hollered: "He's got something hidden in his mask!"

It appeared that way, but Verne was too enraged at this point to care. Blast his agreement not to use The Sleeper. He was going to give this "M" a bloody lesson.

Bill is so big and strong that he handles most of his opponents as if they were children. He can throw a 200 pound man across a ring—on the fly!

"But I like it better being Bill Miller. . . .

"I have never met the man I couldn't lick. . . .

"But it's a lonely life."

Trapping his foe in a corner, Gagne applied the dreaded hold and refused to let go even though three people were tugging at his arms.

Referee Hennig had no choice but to disqualify Gagne. "Why did you do it, Verne?" someone asked him after the bout. "I lost my head," he said, "when M started using every foul possible."

Snorted "M": "Gagne lost and he's groping for excuses again."

The anti-"M" campaign shifted into high gear. "Take off his mask! Take off his mask!" the fans chanted every time he wrestled.

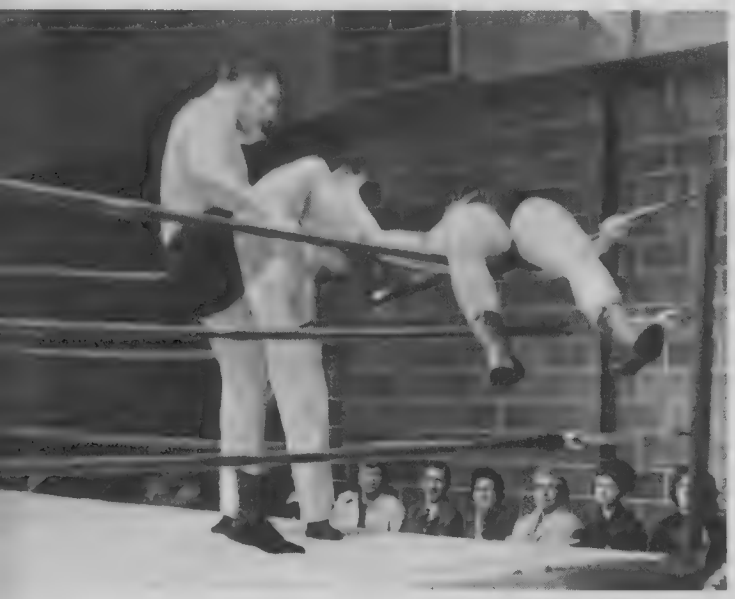
Up in Winnipeg, where he carried his philosophy of how to lose friends and alienate people, a reporter once got close enough to ask: "Do you ever take off that mask?"

"Very seldom," he said. "When I finish a match, I lock my dressing room and take it off before I shower. The only other time I remove it is when I get back to my hotel room."

The mystery man didn't know it, but his crimson mask, with its big white "M" stitched across the forehead, was nearing the end of its reign.

Rabid Winnipeg fans were hoping the huge Canadian idol, Yukon Eric, would turn the trick and some 7,500 flocked to the local arena to see them clash.

The hooded giant laid down one stipulation to promoter John (Cy-



Miller is capable of anything. After dazing victim with blow on chin, Bill draped him on top ropes and kicked him.

When Miller drops his 270 pounds across a victim's throat using his knee as point of impact, result could be tragic.

Famed Omaha promoter Joe Dusek jokingly tells Miller that if he doesn't behave himself he's liable to wind up tarred and feathered and run out of town.

clone) Macalpine: that he would pull off his own mask, and only if Eric pinned him.

The climax came midway in the bout when Eric reverted to "M's" tactics and started kicking, gouging, rabbit-punching and using his boot like a meat-chopper.

"M's" second, Texas Bob Geigel, leaped into the ring, grabbed the boot and began beating Yukon over the head with it.

With a roar, Yukon hurled Bob out of the ring, then slammed "M" into the ropes. As "M" started sliding through the stands, Yukon grabbed for the mask. Off it came!

The crowd's gasp sounded like a cannon blast. A few got a fleeting look at "M's" face just before he covered it with his hands and scrambled from the ring. But he was moving too fast to be identified. Geigel and Krusher Kowalski sprang to his aid and, as "M" was racing for the dressing room in a bent position, the house lights went out.

Shrieks and whistles pierced the blacked out arena. When the lights snapped on again, blood-splattered Yukon Eric, dazed and bewildered, was standing alone in the ring, holding up the torn mask. The fans stamped for "M's" return. But he refused to show.

Some three months later, in July of 1962, "M" returned to the Winnipeg Arena to meet his old foe, Verne Gagne. Verne had been vainly chasing him all over the Midwest and Canada for another match.

Finally, "M" agreed to meet him. This time there weren't going to be any restrictions. Verne challenged him to a death match to settle their feud once and for all. "M" had a typical answer: "Okay, but remember, you're asking for your own funeral."

Verne was wise to "M's" habit of running away when trapped and he made one more stipulation: that the bout be held in a ring enclosed by a wire cage. Surprisingly, "M" offered on objection.

Verne started off by bouncing "M" off the steel cage poles. "M" retaliated by butting him. But there was more to the butt than flesh and bones. Verne turned to the referee to remonstrate: "He's got a piece of metal under that mask!" Catching Gagne off guard, "M" dropped him with a vicious kick.

That did it. Verne drummed "M's" head against the steel poles, bounced him like a yo-yo six times, and was about to put him out of commission with a Sleeper when Bob Geigel tossed a metal chair over the 9-foot-high wire cage.

"M" grabbed it and rushed at Gagne. Backing him into a corner, he swung the chair downward. Verne ducked just in time and the chair went crashing to the mat. Verne picked it up and walloped the bejabbers out of the mystery man.

The Arena was a bedlam as referee Thor Hagen counted to ten. The fans swarmed around the cage, yelling: "The mask! The mask!" As "M" stirred, promoter Macalpine opened the padlocked gate and Geigel rushed in to help his groggy pal.

Right on his heels were three of the top wrestlers from earlier bouts that evening—Doug Gilbert, "M's" old enemy, Ilio Di Paolo and Joe Scarpello. They were going to make sure "M" took off his hood.

When "M" started fussing, Scarpello grabbed him by one arm and Gilbert by the other while referee Hagen held down his legs. Di Paolo then ripped off the hood. There was a moment of stunned silence. Then one fan shouted: "It's Big Bill Miller!"

The masquerade was over.

Every wrestling fan knew Bill Miller, the Fremont, Ohio, giant who copped a string of titles along with his brothers, Ed and and Danny, before he went solo . . . Bill Miller, who earned his doctorate as a veterinarian at Ohio State University in 1951 . . . Bill Miller, OSU's first nine-letter man (three each in football, track and wrestling) . . .

The ironic part about the unmasking was that it had been accomplished by the same guy who had beaten "M" in the finals of the Big 10 college wrestling championships — University of Minnesota star Verne Gagne!

Though the curtain had been raised on Big Bill Miller's past, one big point was still obscure: Why had he covered up his tracks by donning a mask? It's an interesting story.

"Doc" Miller wasn't making much headway when he turned pro in 1952. He had all the equipment — skill, strength and blazing speed. But he needed hard experience to bridge the gap between college and pro wrestling.

He was just beginning to hit this stride when he came up

(*continued on page* 66)

'ATTABOY, JOE —

(see next page)

Mary Hillis casts sarcastic look at Fields as Joe gives very emphatic instructions to Mary and Elaine Ellis before match.

JOE FIELDS TAKES GREAT PRIDE in the undeniable fact that he doesn't take guff from anybody. And since Joe's favorite pastime (he owns a profitable trucking business in Columbus, Ohio) is refereeing wrestling matches between feuding women, that's quite a statement.

Joe believes that the moment he sets even one of his size twelve shoes into a ring he automatically becomes the supreme boss.

"When I give an order," he says emphatically, "I expect it to be obeyed without any horsing around."

Joe doesn't believe in that old fashioned nonsense about man not striking woman. In fact, he doesn't think twice about putting his 230 pounds behind a right or a left to various parts of the female anatomy.

Like an enraged King Kong, Joe lunges for Hillis after she kicked Ellis in the face. Since Mary knows Fields doesn't think twice about belting a woman, she sets to defend herself.

Fields, who tries to be impartial as a referee should, had to admit that he was glad to see Hillis lose. In photo at right, Elaine Ellis sends Mary crashing down to defeat.

"When they deserve belting, I belt 'em!" he says coldly.

And darned if he doesn't.

Now one would think that any red-blooded American would take offense at such ruthless treatment of the gentle sex. But in the case of Joe Fields, that rarely happens. In fact, most people cheer him and encourage him to "Slug her again!" It is all very degrading. That's true. But there is also something very warm and stimulating about Joe's actions for the man who dined on a can of sardines the night before, or who had to get up and give the baby his 2 A.M. feeding while mama lay comfortably in bed.

'Attaboy, Joe. Slug her again! ●

Our photographer was so shocked when Fields hit Hillis in the face that he missed the picture. But he did get this follow-up of Mary, who was stunned by blow, shirking in the corner.

(*continued from page* 53)

After being disqualified, the exhausted Blassie tried to return to the ring and attack Nandor, but his strength was gone.

Japanese star Taro Sakuro, who was quickly beaten by Nandor in the grand finale, still can't understand what happened.

The Sheik protests to officials in dressing room that he was robbed in bout with Mark Lewin. But nobody paid any attention.

(*continued on page* 64)

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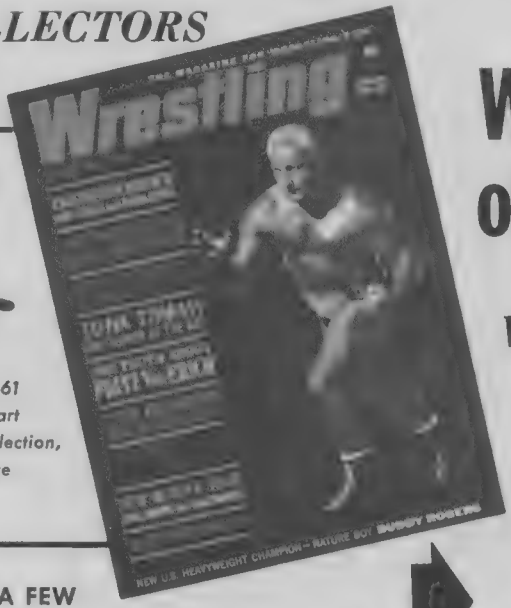

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2—Mark Lewin & Don Curtis taped interview
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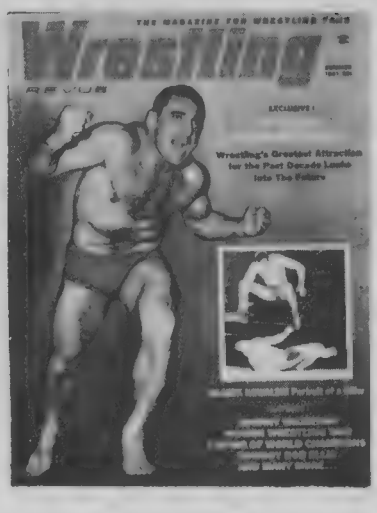
(continued)

Losers Mark Lewin (left) and Don Leo Jonathan comfort each other in gloomy confines of dressing room while crowd cheers out front.

Grand winner Nandor is congratulated by Sammy Menacher after his astonishing victory over some of the world's top wrestlers.

Collector's Item



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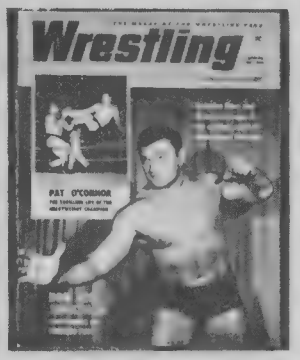

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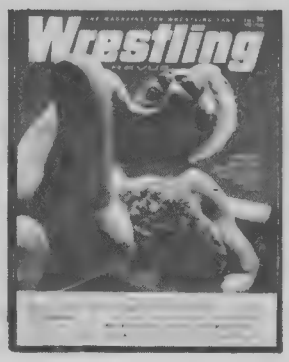

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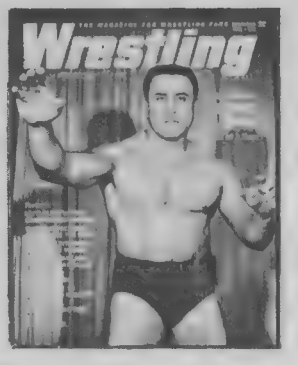

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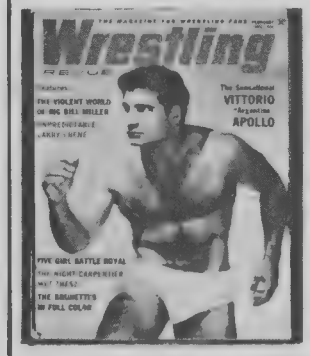

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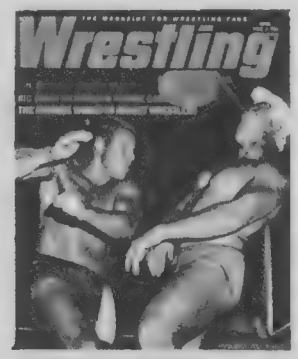

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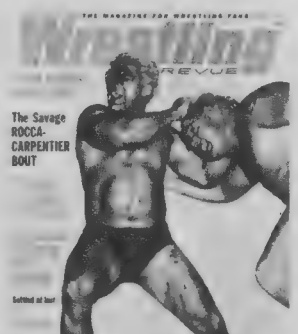

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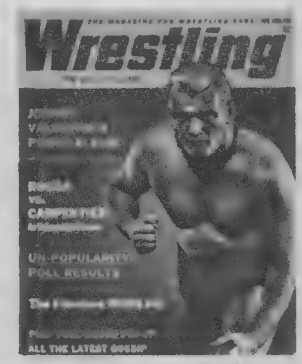

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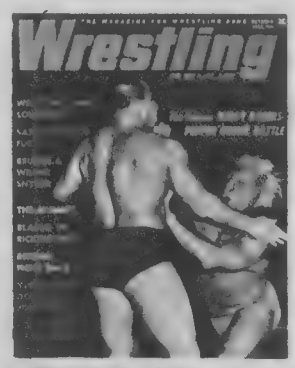

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KOWALSKI

(*continued from page* 21)

with tender regard for his opponents. "He was too gentle, too chicken-hearted," Bert Ruby recalls.

Because of his size, he became known as "Tarzan." In some quarters, the nickname was derogatorily lengthened to "Tarzan, King of the Mice." The dirty wrestlers murdered him.

One night, Kowalski decided it was time for a change. He flexed his muscles, gritted his teeth and glared balefully at the fans. When they booed, he booed right back.

Tearing into his surprised opponent, he grabbed a fistful of hair and yanked – hard. He followed this up by slamming his foe to the mat and stomping all over him. As the fans shrieked abuse, Kowalski walloped his victim across the chops and then loosed a haymaker at the referee.

"I became a villain that night," Kowalski says. "After that, everywhere I went they'd book me against the local favorite."

The gratifying tinkle of money rose to a Wagnerian crescendo as Kowalski's reputation spread. He became known as the "Killer" – a one-man gang of dirty, roughhouse tactics.

He developed two lethal weapons that left a trail of broken bodies. One is the knee drop – a smashing blow across the neck. The other is his controversial claw hold. This involves digging two steel fingers into the solar plexus region and squeezing until his foe blacks out.

The fans reacted to such tactics with mayhem of their own. One frenzied customer hurled a board at him. Luckily, it glanced off his head. Kowalski tore after the culprit and bounced him mercilessly along the wooden fence around the ring.

"He kept bouncing and hollering," Kowalski recalls with grim satisfaction.

The uproar against him grew to such proportions, however, that Kowalski felt compelled to issue a statement. "I never try to deliberately injure a man," he said with injured innocence. "But quite often my opponents do not always observe the rules of fair play and I must defend myself by employing any tactics I feel are justified."

This spate of overblown prose only brought more yowls – and more bottles, fruit, chairs and soggy cigar butts–from the fans. "Killer . . . Killer . . . Killer . . ." they would chant the moment his name was announced.

At first, Kowalski didn't care. He was minting about $100,000 a year as he logged some 150,000 miles in an endless series of bouts. Then the toll began to tell. Physical at the start, then mental . . .

Living out of a suitcase . . . hustling from one dreary hotel room to another . . . gulping stale coffee with rancid hamburgers and soggy pies . . . always on the run, a shadow flitting from ring to ring . . .

And all the while, hearing the word "Killer" drumming torment into his brain . . . seeing all those frenzied faces contorted with ugly rage . . . feeling the raw edge of enmity everywhere he went . . .

He was restless, angry, morose, ready to throw it all up. The climax came after he sheared off Yukon Eric's ear in that historic bout in Montreal back in 1954.

He dropped out of sight for a whole year, slipping off to the movies by himself . . . closeting himself in his photographic dark room . . . continuing to experiment with his tricky diet – and brooding, always brooding.

Finally, his "I am" philosophy took hold and he got the comeback feeling. At the same time, he had found the key to his dietary problems. He put on 85 pounds in 66 days, surged out of retirement stronger and more durable than ever, and blasted his way to the top once again.

Today, at 35, he's still a loner tortured by some of the old doubts. But at least he has found some measure of peace. This doesn't mean he has dropped his villainous ways. He's meaner than ever. But all the name-calling and chair-throwing doesn't bother him as much as it used to.

"That's what the fans come for –to see a battle. And I give it to them," he says. Then he adds, with a crooked smile, "After all, I am supposed to be The Killer, no?"

Right, Killer. And they may hate your purple-colored guts – but they'll climb over each other every time just to see you in that ring. ●

MILLER

(*continued from page* 58)

against veteran star The Great Scott. He was mauled so savagely that he wound up in the hospital. Lying in bed, Bill made a dramatic decision that changed his entire career.

As he explained it later: "The Great Scott ran my head into a turnbuckle. From there on I figured the best way not to have it happen again was to give it to the other guy first!"

But his new role as a brutal grappler soon began to prey on his mind. He had built up a following in the Midwest as a nice guy. Then, suddenly, he changed. "They couldn't understand it. I felt as though I had let them down . . ."

Bill seriously considered reverting to his old ways. But he had learned that fans don't shell out to see nice guys.

He mulled over his problem for a long time. Finally, the answer came. It was simple – he'd wear a mask! He'd have to go "underground," of course – but at least he wouldn't be hurting all those fans who had grown to like him.

"Doc" Miller was naturally distressed when Gagne "exposed" him. But he says: "In a way, I'm glad it happened. It was a pretty lonely life. I was on the run all the time to keep my identity secret."

But if you think "Doc" has mended his ways, you're dead wrong. Matter of fact, Bill, who is now 34, is meaner than ever. "That's what the fans want," he says with irrefutable logic, "and I can't let them down now, can I?" ●

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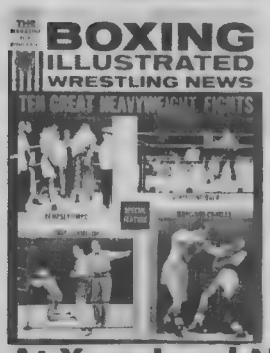

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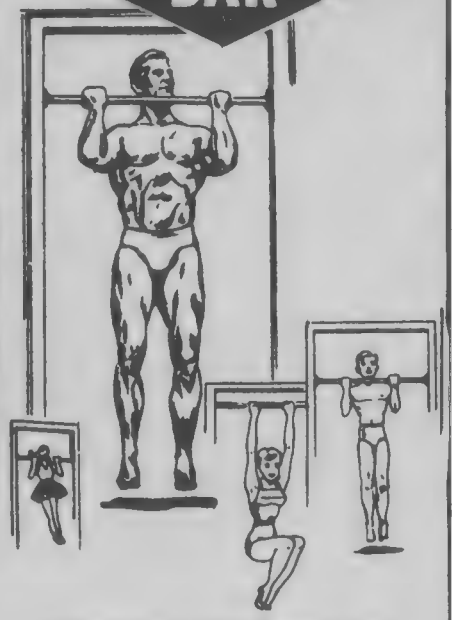

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Heading back to dressing room after scoring another sensational victory, Moreno is followed by two young autograph-hunters. As usual, the handsome new star obliged.

(continued from page 47)

Mareno leaped with joy when he learned his destination — Barcelona, Spain. Where could he get an opportunity like this, grubbing away as a jewelry designer in an obscure store on a Mexico City side street?

He trained especially hard for the bout. This was his big chance. He couldn't fluff it. He would show his parents that he had made the right decision in becoming a wrestler.

His opponent was a scowling, gnarled lump of a man — mean as they come, and dirty. Mario, a clean, scientific type, had run into his kind before — but this fellow was the foulest.

BAM! A head chop sent the Mexican sprawling. He staggered to his feet, shaking his head to clear the fog. SLAM! A savage butt hurled him against a ring post. Mario wobbled on rubbery legs.

As dazed as he was, Mario felt a hot flash of shame. This was happening to HIM — Mario Mareno, pride of the Mexican amateurs. What would his parents think if he lost? And his four brothers and three sisters, who adored him, and followed every match?

The thought hit him like a splash of cold water. Retreating swiftly, he parried his foe's lunging swipes until his strength came flowing back. Then, stalking the Ugly One like a jungle cat, he finally found an opening.

That was all he needed. He tied up his opponent like a pretzel, unwound him, bent, twisted, squeezed him — and then smashed him to the canvas with a devastating flying kick. The guy just lay there. All Mario had to do was turn him over and pin him.

Mario went on to pile up one sensational victory after another, winning the middleweight championship of Mexico in 1959 and the Venezuela Cup in 1960.

At 24 and with six years of pro wrestling under his iron-hard stomach, the 210-pound Mareno recently invaded the U.S. South of the border, he's known as the "Jungle Cat." The guys he has met in the States can understand why.

In touring the southwest, Mario has run into only one problem, if you can call it that...women! They can't keep their manicured paws off him. "It's just like those days in the jewelry shop, with all those women tourists," he says.

Then he sighs and adds: "Such lovely tourists!"•

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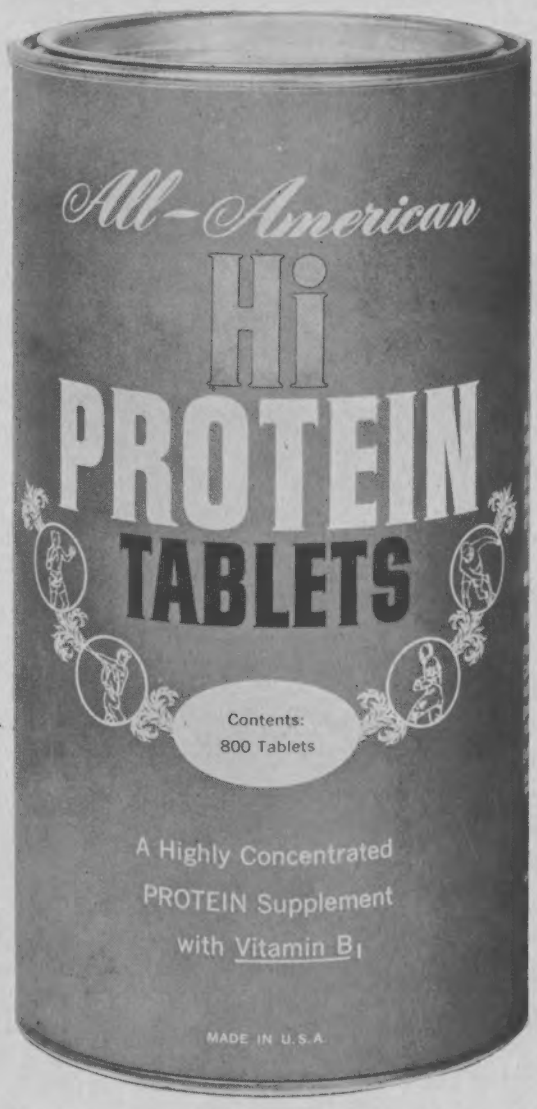

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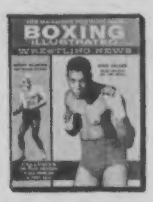

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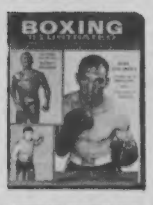

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AUG. 1959
PEPPER GOMEZ
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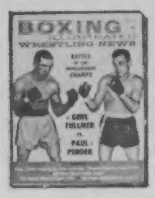

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BUDDY ROGERS VS. PAT O'CONNOR
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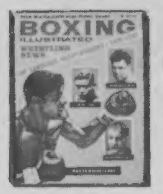
JOHNNY GILBERT



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HAYSTACKS CALHOUN
MIGUEL PEREZ
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ROGERS-O'CONNOR (TITLE BOUT)
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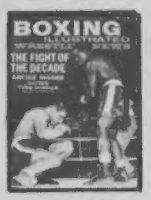

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BULLDOG BROWER
HANDSOME JOHNNY BAREND
MAGNIFICENT MAURICE
ROCCA & HIS WIFE
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MATCH RESULTS

OCT. 1962
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ANDRE DRAPP
SAILOR THOMAS
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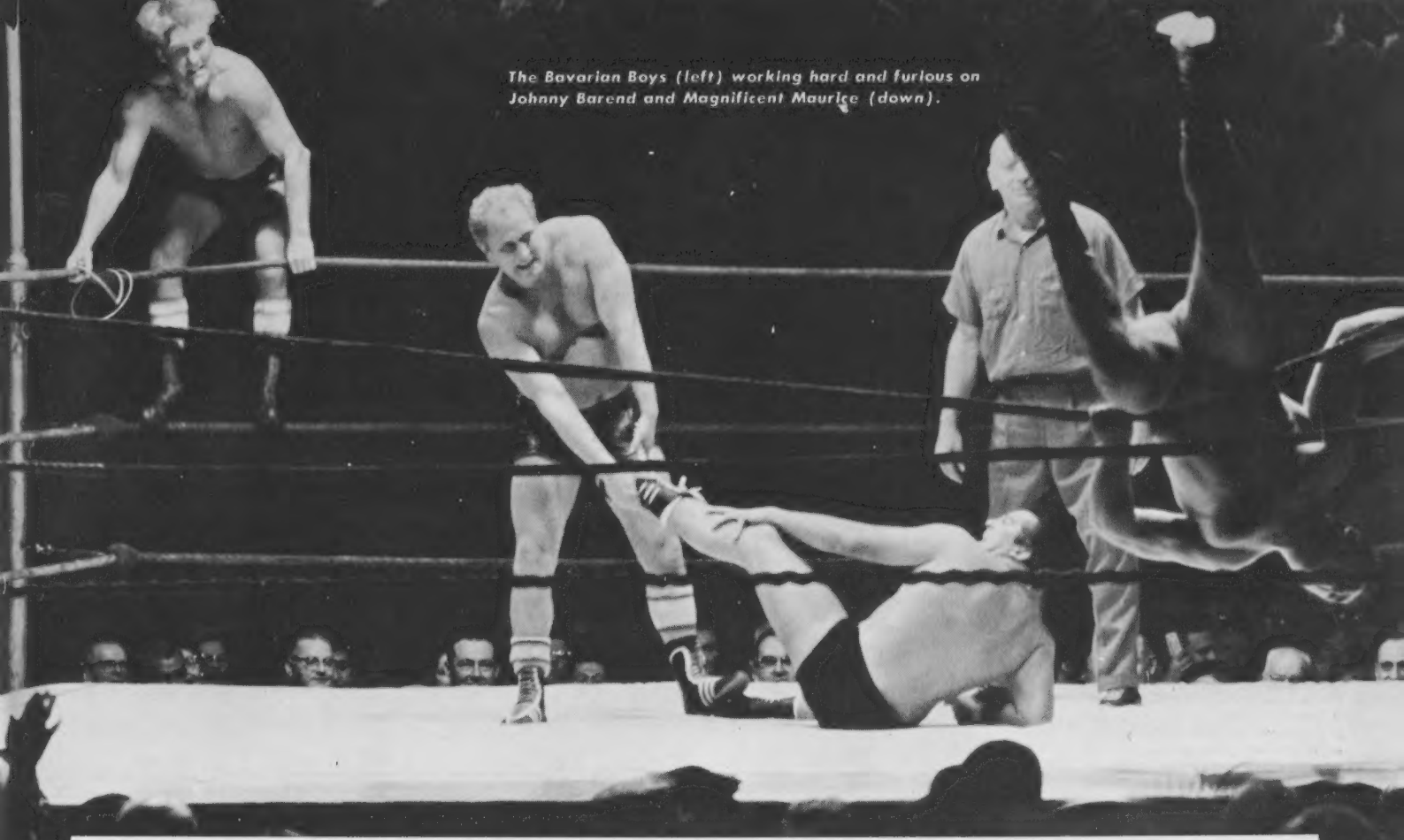

The Bavarian Boys (left) working hard and furious on Johnny Barend and Magnificent Maurice (down).

OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS

These ratings, which are compiled with the full authority and approval of The National Wrestling Alliance, professional wrestling's top governing body, are universally accepted as "Official."

MALE

1—BUDDY ROGERS
2—VERNE GAGNE
3—LOU THESZ
4—PEPPER GOMEZ
5—RAY STEVENS
6—ED CARPENTIER
7—ANTONINO ROCCA
8—BOBO BRAZIL
9—KILLER KOWALSKI
10—EDDIE GRAHAM

FEMALE

1—FABULOUS MOOLAH
2—KAREN KELLOGG
3—JUNE BYERS
4—ANNE CASEY
5—JUDY GRABLE
6—LORRAINE JOHNSON
7—PENNY BANNER
8—VICKIE ADAMS
9—FRAN GRAVETTE
10—KATHY STARR

TAG TEAMS

1—DICKIE STEINBORN & DOUG GILBERT
2—ART & STAN NEILSON
3—THE BAVARIAN BOYS
4—THE KANGAROOS
5—JOHNNY BAREND & MAGNIFICENT MAURICE
6—THE MEDICS
7—MITSU ARAKAWA & KINJI SHIBUYA
8—DON CURTIS & JOE SCARPA
9—THE BOLOS
10—THE ASSASSINS

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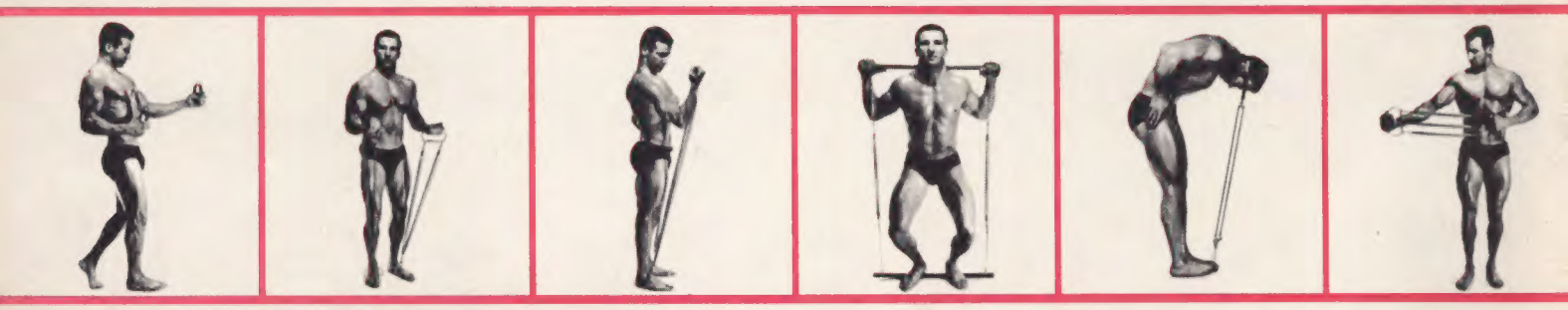

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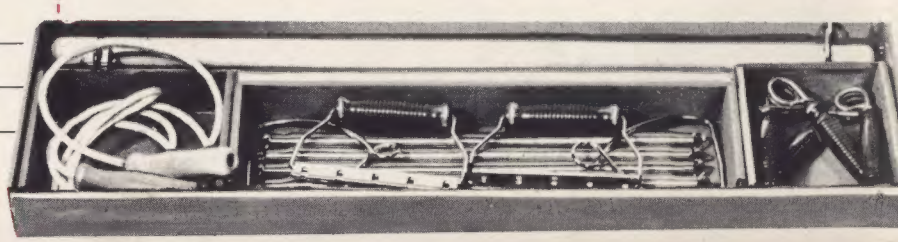
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